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(The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are the writer's own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publishers).

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SHANMUKHA

IN FOCUS

If there is one theme that stands perennial research, it is Tyagaraja and his Nada Dhyana or Nāda Yoga. SHANMUKHA reproduces a scholarly paper presented at a music Conference, which scans the subject with copious illustrations from the Saint's gems.

While we know that Jayadeva's "Gita Govinda" has been a fount of inspiration to later day saint poets it is surprising to learn that as many as 126 "emulations" of such Kavya have come into vogue dedicated to Krishna, Shiva, Skanda, Rama as their central character. One such Kavya "Sangita Raghavam" by Rama Kavi has been analysed by two eminent researches for SHANMUKHA.

Gnānānanda Tirtha, a Gayathri Upasaka and a Vaggeyakara of this century, made an impact during his life time. A worshipper of Tyagaraja, his compositions have fluency and simplicity clothing lofty ideals. SHANMUKHA presents a profile culled from family sources.

"Mali and Music" never stales. From its archives SHANMUKHA dishes out a "nostalgia" of its founder-Editor.

"Meteoric Rise & Frustrated Wishes" is a poignant profile on the musical 'Homa' Bird, K. B. Sundarambal, by the inimitable author of "Garlands".

Madhyamavathi and Mangalam had once engaged the attention of musicians and musicologists, and their views were published in these columns. Here is another angle projected by a musician.

SHANMUKHA felicitates the city Natyacharya honoured with E. Krishna Iyer Award by SRUTI Foundation.

The bloom of "Yet Another Garland" brings a fresh whiff of fragrance. A hat-trick for the author. SHANMUKHA traverses over the leaves and brings to you a review.

It is not for nothing that Arunagirinathar is hailed as "Chandappāvalapperumān." His "Tiruppugazh" is the stronghold of Laya intricacies. A scholar - musician who once headed a music college takes you through different phases of pace- permutations the saint- poet gifted to the music world.

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Tyagaraja and Nada Yoga *

By V. Subramaniam

Nada, which is the soul of music, is of divine origin. Even though Nada is also 'Sabda' or sound, it could be classified as vibrations of auditory perception which soothingly touch the mind. On the other hand, 'Sabda' which would include harsh vibrations as well could affect the mind adversely.

Of the Panchabhuthas - Prithivi, Ap, Thejas, Vayu and Akasa-the first to be created was Akasa. Akasa is space. This element is nearest in many respects, to the Paramatma.

*Tasmātvā Etasmāth Atmana
Ākāsha Sambhoota*

From that Atma, Akasa-space-was born. Paramatma is all-pervading; so is space. Space is unaffected by anything happening in it; so is Atma. Atma is ever present. It was there. It is there and it will be there forever. But space was born with creation and it would end or dissolve with Pralaya, and it is in this respect that it is different from the Atma. Akasa is the medium for Nada, and the first Nada that originated from the Divine was Omkara-the Pranava. The creation of the Vedas followed. The Vedas are known as Sruti, because of the importance of Nada or tonal variations in their rendition.

Sruyate iti Sruti

"What is heard is Sruti" The effect of the vibrations of Veda Ghosha on the surroundings is highly elevating and divine. The Vedas have been handed down through generations only through *Kar-naparampara*.

The roots of music could be found in the Sama Veda. Almost 75 per cent of the

contents of the Sama Veda is the same as that of the Rig and Yajur Vedas, but the presentation in Sama is in musical form, and hence the rendition of the Sama Veda is known as Sama Gana. Nada variations in musical form emanated from the Sama Veda. In the *Bhagavat Gita*., Sri Krishna says.

Vedānam Sāma vedosmi

"Among the Vedas, I am Sama Veda".

Next emanated the Sapta Swaras, from the five faces of Lord Shiva-Sadyojata, Aghora, Tatpurusha, Easana and Vama deva.

Now coming to the word "Yoga", it is derived from the word "Yuj", meaning to join or Yoke. This helps to join the personal Self, Jeevatma, with the Universal Self, Paramatma. Another connotation for yoga is discipline. Nada Yoga means the practice of music with Bhakti to attain the absolute bliss of Moksha or realisation of the Supreme.

For the purification of the mind and for channelising it towards the ultimate goal of Moksha, the scriptures have stipulated different Sadhanas for the four Yugas.

Dhyāyan Krute Yajan Yagnai

Tretāyām Dwāparervayam

Yadāpnoti Tadapnoti

Kalau Sankeertya Keshavam.

"Men who seek Punyam, obtain it through abstract and deep meditation in the Krita Yuga, through sacrifices and Yagnas in the Treta Yuga, through adoration of God in the Dwapara Yuga and through Sankeerthana of Keshava in the Kali Yuga".

* Paper presented at the Music Academy, Madras during the Annual Music Festival in December, 1994, morning session.

The Sadhanas get simplified from Yuga to Yuga, and in comparison with the others, Sankeerthanam, which is the simplest and the least strenuous form, has been stipulated for the Kaliyuga. What penance, sacrificial Yagnas and Pujas gave man in the earlier yugas, is obtained by him through singing the praise of God in the Kali Yuga.

The Upanishads place music on a high pedestal, as a means of realising the ultimate. The Chandogya Upanishad states (1-7-6):

Tat ye ime Veenayam Gayanti ||

Etam te Gayanti

Tasmat te Dhanasanaya |

"Those who sing on the Veena, sing of Him alone, and thereby become endowed with wealth".

The Taitriya Upanishad declares (3-10-5):

Etath Samagayan Aste

"The wise man spends time singing the song of Brahman".

Here is an interesting Shloka about one who has no music in him:

Sahityasangeeta Kalavihina

Sakshat Pasu Puchcha Vishana Heena

Trinam na Khadannapi Jeevamana

*Tad Bhagadeyam Paramam
Pashunam ||*

"The one who lacks in Sahitya (literature) and Sangeetha (music) is verily a cow without horns and tails. He lives without eating grass-that is all. In fact, he does not compete with the cows, for grass is a great good fortune for the cows".

Everyone is exposed to music from birth. The mother sings the lullaby and the child, soothened, drifts away into sleep. This is common to every child, indicating the presence of music in every being. This again goes to prove that almost everybody would have least difficulty in adopting

music as an Upasana Marga, a Moksha Sadhana. Singing the praise of God not only gives Chitta Shuddhi (purity of mind) but also gives Ananda to the singer.

God Almighty chose Saint Tyagaraja to impart the knowledge of Nadopasana to humanity. Tyagaraja was an Avatara Purusha - an incarnation of Narada, the repository of Nada Vidya, and Valmiki, the Kavi or poet. Narada handed over the "Grantha Swararnavam" to Tyagaraja, and Tyagaraja adores the sage as his Guru in Sangeetha Shastra.

Musical Vis-a-Vis Devotional Aspect

We are totally carried away and obsessed with the musical aspect of the composer, entirely overlooking the devotional aspect thereof, which is the quintessence of his Sangeetham. His music is resplendant with Bhakti and Bhakti alone. He has so lucidly incorporated so many Upanishadic statements in his compositions. The Raga Bhava and Sahitya Bhava are so intricately woven that the pieces rise to sublime heights.

Saint Tyagaraja has portrayed the divine origination of music in his Kriti, Nadatanum Anisham, in Chittaranjani Raga.

Pallavi

Nadatanumanisham Shankaram

"Namami me Manasa Shirasa ||

Anupallavi

Modakara Nigamottama Sama

Vedasaram Varamvaram ||

Charanam

Sadyojatadi Panchavakraja

Sarigamapadhani Vara Saptasvara

Vidhyalolam Vidaltta Kalam

Vimalahrudaya Tyagarajapalam ||

"I bow to Shankara, the embodiment of Nada, with my mind and body - to Him who is the essence of the blissful Sama Veda, the best of Vedas. I bow every time to Him who is delighting in the art of the seven Swaras, Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni, born of His five faces, Sadyojata, etc., I bow to Him, the destroyer of Kala. To the protector of pureminded Tyagaraja do I bow."

The Vedas emphasise that knowledge of the Self and realisation of the Supreme Brahman can be attained only with the guidance of a proper Guru. Without a proper Guru, realisation is not possible. Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada has described the attributes of a Sadguru in His Vivekachudamani:

Shrotriyoavrajinioakamahato Yo

Brahma Viduttama

*"Brahmanyutarata Shanto Nirindhana
Jwanala"*

The Guru is well versed in the Vedas; he is sinless; he is not smitten by desire; he is a knower of Brahman; he is super eminent. Withdrawing himself into Brahman, he is ever at peace. He is like a smouldering fire unfed by fuel."

It is only he who has enquired into Brahman after the study of the Upanishads can qualify for direct realisation of Brahman.

The scriptures indicate three main steps in the process of realizing Brahman.

1. Shravanam - Listening to the teacher and learning the Vedas.

2. Mananam - Gaining clarity by removing doubts.

3. Nididhyasanam - Assimilating what has been taught by the Guru, by contemplation.

A person should have passed through these three stages to qualify as a Sadguru. One who has learnt the scriptures but has not assimilated the knowledge, cannot reach the level of a perfect Guru.

Yet another qualification which a Guru should possess, as given in the Vivekachudamani, is:

*Ahetuka daya Sindhu
Bandhuramanatham Satam ||*

The Guru is an ocean of spontaneous compassion that asks for no reason. He is a friend to the pure who make obeisance to Him.

Tyagaraja, no doubt, had all these attributes, and hence, is known as Sadguru.

The Vedantic teaching that attainment of Poorna Jnana is not possible in the absence of a Sadguru, is conveyed in Tyagaraja's Gowrimanohari composition:

Pallavi :

*Guraleka Yetuvanti Guniki Deliyaka
bodu ||*

Anupallavi:

*Karugaina Hrudaroga Gahanamunu
Gottanu Sat ||*

Charanam:

*Tanuvu Suta Dhanadara Dayadi
Bandhavulu*

Janiyinch chedaru Jalini Karunato

*Manasunantaka Manchi manda nuchn
Tatvabodhanajesi*

Kapadu Tyagrajaptudaku ||

Without a teacher, Sadguru, even the most meritorious person cannot clear the dense forest of ignorance that deludes the soul. Health, wealth, children, wife and other relations seem to disappear, causing great anguish. A Guru alone would be able to protect one, by administering with love, the elixir of spiritual initiation and enlightenment, to keep the mind free from attachments.

A perusal of Saint Tyagaraja's life would reveal that he was already a realized soul, i.e., a Jnani. He had reached this level through his Sath Karmas of the previous Janmas. Poorva Janma Sukrithams and whatever trials and tribulations he underwent in this Janma was the residue of his Prarabdha Karma. He was a Jeevanmukta. A Jeevanmukta is one who has attained Mukti or liberation in the

present Janma itself, i.e., even before death. Lord Krishna describes the Jnani in the 13th Shloka of the 12th chapter of the *Bhagavat Gita*, thus:

*Adveshta Sarvabhootāna Maitra Karuna
Eva Cha*

*Nirmamo Nirahankār Samadukha
Sukha Eshami II*

"Without hatred for any being, friendly, compassionate, without the sense of 'mine', without the sense of 'I' emotionally equal about misery and happiness, and an embodiment of forbearance".

Tyagaraja had all the above attributes. That a person is a Jnani, would become evident from his interaction with the world around him. His emotional maturity, stability and equanimity would reveal this.

The term 'Bhakti' has two connotations. One is Bhakti as love or devotion to God, and the other Bhakti as a spiritual discipline a Sadhana. Any action towards spiritual upliftment, such as Puja, Japa, meditation, Veda Adhyayana, etc., would fall under this category. Nadayoga, which is the Combination of music and Bhakthi would be an effective Sadhana in cleansing the mind of the impurities such as 'Raga' and 'Dwesha' and its spiritual evolution.

Tyagaraja has clearly affirmed that knowledge of music, Sangeetha Jnanam, devoid of Bhakti, is like a rudderless boat trying to cross the ocean of Samsara.

In his Dhanyasi piece, he says:

Pallavi

*Sangeeta Jnanamu Bhaktivinā
Sanmārgamu galade Manasā II*

Anupallavi

*Bhringi Natesā Sameraja Ghataja
Matanga Naradadulupāsīnche II*

Charanam

Nyāyanyāyamu Delusunu Jagamulu

Māyāmayamani Delusunu Durguna

Kāyājādi Shatripula Jayinche

Kāryamu Delusunu Tyagarajuniki"

Knowledge of music bereft of devotion, is of no value and cannot lead to salvation. The music practised by Bahktas like Bhringi, Natesa, Anjaneya, Agastya, Matanga and Narada can alone secure it.

Tyagaraja, who is able to distinguish between right and wrong, who is aware that the world is Maya, and who also knows how to conquer the six internal enemies of man-Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada and Matsarya-knows this matter well.

Again, Tyagaraja has described people who have no Bhakti as a herd of wild elephants, in his composition "*Janakiramana*" in Suddhaseemanthini Raga: *Bhaktiheengjana Matagaja Jala*.

In the 12th chapter of the *Bhagavat Gita*, Lord Krishna has described five stages of Bhakti in the spiritual evolution of a person. In the first stage, the devotee, through his Karma, performs Puja to his Ishtadevata, seeking worldly benefits. This is *Sakama Bhakti*. In the second stage, he worships the lord without seeking material ends. This is *Nishkama Bhakti*. This will purify and quieten the mind, asking it fit for Upasana or meditation. In the third stage, he meditates upon his Ishtadevata, keeping Him as the ultimate goal-*Ekarupa Upasanam*. In the fourth stage, he meditates upon his Ishtadevata as everything-the whole world of things and beings is viewed as the Lord Himself. This is *Anekaroopa Upasanam* or *Virat Upasanam*. In the fifth and final stage, he enters Jnanayoga to discover the *Aroopa* or the formless, attributeless Lord. Here, all divisions and limitations vanish. This is "*Jeeva-Brahma-aikyam*" which makes one a Jeevanmukta.

Everyone has to go through all the five stages of Bhakti, culminating in Jnanam. Without Jnanam there is no Moksha. This is declared by the Vedas in the Purushasukta:

Tanevam Vidwanamruta iha Bhavati

Nānya Pantha Vidyateayanāya.

"One who realises the Lord thus, becomes immortal. There is no other means for the goal of immortality."

Tyagaraja, a Jnani, was above all these stages of Bhakti. He has composed pieces for all the stages of Bhakti only for the benefit of humanity. Of the many songs he has composed suitable for *Ekarooopa Bhakti*, I am choosing "*Rama Ni Samanam Evaru*" in Kharaharapriya, for demonstration.

Pallavi

*Rama Ni Samānamevaru Raghuvam
soddharaka*

Anupallavi:

Bhama Maruvampu molaka

Bhaktiyanu Panjarapu Chiluka II

Charanam :

*Paluku Paluku Laku Tene lolku
Mātaladu Sōda*

rulugala Hari Tyagaraja

Kulavibhusha Mradu Subha Subhasha II

Rama! Who is there equal to you, O glorifier of Raghu's lineage!

Your spouse, Janaki, is like a slender spring of 'maru' flower, and is like a captive parrot in the cage of Bhakti.

You are Yourself gentle in speech and have brothers whose words drip with honey. You are Thyagaraja's family deity.

His composition *Marugelara* in Jayanthasri is one of the many songs on *Anekaroopa Bhakti*, the next stage. In this song Tyagaraja says:

"O Supreme One! Why hide Thyself? O Raghava! I have learnt and realised that You are everything in this world. I do not think in my mind of anyone but you, Pray protect me."

Paramathmudu in *Vagadheeshwari* is again a composition in which Tyagaraja sees the Lord in everything, revealing *Anekaroopa Bhakti*.

Pallavi:

Paramathmudu Velige Muchchata

Bhaga Telusukore

Anupallavi

Hariyata Harudata Surulata Narulata

Akhilanda Ktulata Andarilalo II

Charanam :

Gagananila Tejo Jala Bhumayamagu

Mruga Khaga naga taru kotulalo!

Sagunamulalo Vignamulalo Satatamu

Sadhu Tyagarajadi Ashritulalo II

"Know well how Paramatma, the Lord, shines in all glory in everything.

In Hari, Hara, the Devas, human beings and in the innumerable worlds- He shines in all the species of creation made of the five elements (fire, air, earth, water and ether); in animals, birds, mountains, trees and even in the good and the bad, and always in holy devotees as Tyagaraja.

In the grand *Mukhari* piece, "*Ksheenamai Tiruga*" Tyagaraja indicates that supreme bliss is derived in the realisation of the Paramatma-Jeevatma-aikyam.

Pallavi

Ksheenamaitiruga Janminichi

Siddhi Manura Oh Manasa

Anupallavi

*Geervāna Natakālānkara Veda Purana
Yagna Tapa Japadula Phalamulu*

Charanam :

Yeti Jesina Jagannathudu Shiramuna
Hrudayamuna Vahinchi

Padilamaina Satpadamuno sange
Bata Tyagaraja Vinutuni Bhajanara II

O mind! Avoid rebirth on this transient Earth of misery and death after the effects of the merits-
Punya - acquired are depleted.

Avoid the fate of taking birth again after the depletion of merit acquired by the study of Sanskrit literature and drama, Vedas and Puranas, performance of Yagnas, Japa and Tapas.

O mind! What the Lord of the Universe would gladly accept with head and heart, and bless Tyagaraja with the supreme, everlasting bliss which would be the sole aim of Tyagaraja.

That realisation of the *Paramatma-Jeevatma-aikyam* is the ultimate bliss, and not the Punya acquired through rituals, on the depletion of which, rebirth on the earth, is sure to result, is affirmed here. These would take the soul only to heaven and not to total Mukti.

Tyagaraja clearly reiterates in the composition. "*Jnanamu sagarada*" which was, as was indicated by Vidwan Sri Calcutta K.S. Krishnamurthi, in the Raga Shadvidya Margini" and now popularly being rendered in the Poorvikalyani", that the highest knowledge is the realisation of the oneness of the Paramatma and Jeevatma.

Pallavi :

Jnana Mosaga Rada Garudagamana
Vada

Anupallavi

Neenamamu Chenamadi

Nirmalamainadi

Charanam:

Paramath mudu Jeevathmudu
Padunaku Lokamulu

Narakinnara Kimpurushu Naradadi
Munulu

Parip oorna Nishkalanga Niravadhi
Sukhadayaka

Vara Tyagarjarchita Varamu Tanane II

Won't You give me light, Garudavaharnal why contend with me? My mind is purified by reciting Your name.

Bestower of absolute and eternal bliss! Won't You give me the light that would show that the Jeevatma and Paramatma are one and the same, and that I am one with all humans and celestials such as Kinnaras. Kimpurushas and Sages like Narada in the fourteen worlds.

Nama Japa, rituals and other Spiritual Sadhanas will only cleanse the mind of Raga, Dwesha, etc., and will make it fit for Vedanta, Vicharra, which alone will reveal the supreme knowledge as:

"Tatvamasi" Aham Brhamasmi"

Tyagraja took this Janma as an Avatara Purusha, and he was a Jeevanmuktha, but having taken the Janma, he took to San-nyasa Ashrama after going through the other three Ashramas in succession for the attainment of Moksha.

The Kaivalya Upanishad declares:

Na Karmanā na Prajaya Dhanena

Tyagenaike Amrutatva Mānashu

Parena Nākam Nihitam Guhāyām

Vibhajate yad yatayo vishanti II

Vedanta Vignana Sunishchitartha Satva I

Te Brahma Loketu Parāntakāle

Paramruta Parimuchyanti Sarve II

It is through renunciation that a few seekers have attained immortality - not through rituals, not through progeny, not through wealth. Those seekers attain (the immortal Self) which shines beyond the heavens and which is located in the intellect.

Through a life of renunciation, the pure-minded seekers clearly grasp the subject of the Vedantic teaching. Having become one with the infinite Brahman

(while living), all those seekers get totally merged into Brahman at the time of final death.

Music - Lovers, Musicians, Teachers, Students, Researchers! Celebration/Function/Concert/Gifts?

"Flower Garland"

Sorry, they throw it away as if it is of thorns!

"Shawl/Angavastram?"

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"Cheque?"

No objection; but it vanishes like vapour
Anything else enduring?

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Rama Kavi's "Sangitha Raghavam"

BY Dr. Gowri Kuppuswamy & Dr. M. Hariharan

Hinduism is the most ancient among all the religions of the world. As the joint creation of the Aryan and non-Aryan inhabitants of India, it represents a glorious attempt to lead on to a spiritual life. Hindus were without doubt the first in history to get an inkling regarding the existence of a supreme power beyond one's comprehension. The concept of Bhakthi or devotion to God can be traced to the *Upanishads* according to which He pervades the entire Universe. Bhakthi is the Keynote of Hinduism; it destroys self-arrogance and elevates the mind to monumental heights.

The different forms of Bhakthi have been listed by Prahladha in the *Bhagavatha* in answer to his father Hiranyakasipu and they have also been described by Narada in his *Bhaktisutras*. The Navavidhabhakthi as well as its offshoot, the Nama Siddhantha, falls under conventional Bhakthi and has adoration for its basis. The *Bhagavatha* states that there have been many who have attained God with their minds purified by the intensity of their devotion towards Almighty through love.

"Snehat yatha bhakthyesvare manah

avasya tadayam hitva bhagavastadgatim gatah

"Madhura Bhakti"

Among the different feelings or Rasas, this aspect of love or Sringara later on came to be worked out into a distinct system of devotion. The absolute love symbolized by the feeling of Radha for Krishna was stripped of its personal associations and exalted to the level of a mode of devotion. This caught the imagination of great saints like Chaithanya

who became ardent protagonists of this system called "Madhura Bhakthi" in contrast to "Vaidika Bhakthi". It is also known as "Prema Bhakthi" in the shape of intense devotion and pure love between a lover and his beloved. In his *Bhaktisutras* Narada speaks of Bhakthi as being essentially of the nature of love and Rupa Goswami has elaborated the same in his *Bhakthi Rasamritha Sindu*. This involves a vicarious contemplation, the devotee considering himself as a lady yearning for union with her lover, the deity. The aim is the attainment of the state represented by the spontaneous and irresistible love of Radha for Krishna. This arises from a discipline with many states beginning with *Sraddha* or faith and culminating in *Maha bhava* or the state of emotional plank. Madhura Bhava or Nayaka-Nayika Bhava is the dominant state in the form of absolute divinity.

Divine Sportive Play

The Madhura Bhava approach to God or Worship of God through Nayaka-Nayika Bhava came into vogue even at the time of the early Saivite and Vaishnavite saint composers of South India like Manickavachagar and Andal and their *Tirukkovai*, *Tiruvachagam*, *Tiruppavai* and *Nachchiyar Tirumozhi* are earlier Lakshyas of this mode of approach to God through the union of the individual soul with the universal soul. But the most outstanding work which gives prominence to this theme is undoubtedly the *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva. Being a great religious work on the devotion to Lord Krishna, it represented the devotional upsurge of medieval India.

In the *Gita Govinda* we clearly see the divine sportive play of Radha and Krishna

as a means of worship and devotional exercise. i.e., *Sadhana* and *Upasana* in two fold ways known as *Aisvarya* (richness) and *Madhurya* (beauty) involving the realization of different aesthetic sentiments (*Rasasvadana*). Besides we perceive here not only the scheme of Nayaka-Nayika Bhava but also *Upasya-Upasaka Bhedha* marking the distinctive character of the song pieces. As such all the Chaithanyaite Vaishnavas consider the *Gita Govinda* not only as a first-rate poetical composition but also as a great religious work in the nature of Bhakti-Rasa Sastra. The medium of expression through which Jayadeva depicts the divine love has made *Gita Govinda* Sringara Svarupa even as the divine song *Bhagavad Gita* is Vedantha Svarupa.

Jayadeva of Kendubilvam in Orissa composed the *Gita Govinda* in the 12th century. He was one of the gems who adorned the court of King Lakshmana Sena of Navadvip or the modern Nadia of Bengal. He has dealt with the concepts of Karma Yoga, Gnana Yoga as well as Bhakthi Yoga in this great lyrical work. He is widely held to be the founder of the Bhakthi movement which grew in strength right from the medieval times defying the aggressive sectarianism and intense bigotry of the preachers of diverse religious faiths.

Precursor of Modern Composition

Just as there are 12 Skandas in the *Bhagavatha*, so too *Gita Govinda* comprises 12 Sargas. It consists of 24 Ashtapadis which likewise can be equated with the 24 Aksharas of the *Gayatri Mahantra*. Ashtapadis derive their name from the fact that each composition contains eight Charanas. They are Dvidhathu Prabandhas comprising the two sections Udgraha and Dhruva corresponding to the present day Pallavi and Charana.

The *Gita Govinda* Ashtapadi hymns are the earliest examples of regular music compositions with each song being set in specific Raga and Tala. However, these precise Ragas and Talas are not at present adhered to in their rendition. Round about the 17th century these Ashtapadis were set to South Indian Ragas by Ramudu Bhagavathar of Tirumalrajapuram.

Literary Style

The Ashtapadi hymns are rich in description and contain vivid portrayals of diverse situations. The literary style of *Gita Govinda* was introduced into Sanskrit literature for the first time by Jayadeva. It contains a soft and fluid syllables scheme of continuous sweet narrative and poetic forms and soothing metres which charm all lovers of poetry and music. The sweetness of diction, the musical beauty of the lyrics, the softness of word pictures and above all the artistic expression of the universal human feelings depicted in the *Gita Govinda* have a captivating effect all round.

The *Gita Govinda* Padagana really formed the background for the evolution of the Padavali Kirtanas of Bengal as well as diverse Kirtana proto-types in different parts of India. It is universally recognized as the richest and finest Sringara Kavya representing the higher primal aesthetic quality of Indian sentiments.

Quite a number of scholars from India as well as abroad have written elaborate critical commentaries on the *Gita Govinda* discussing various aspects of love delineated therein. This distinguished galaxy includes Rana Kumbha, Lakshmidhara, Prabonanda Sarasvathi, Goswami, Sankar Misra, Van Schroeder, Zasser Jones and others. The notable features expatiated upon by these critics include the plot, hero and sentiment and many of them have extolled the work as a Mahakavya.

In the history of Bhakthi literature in Sanskrit, the Gitakavyas are to a large extent responsible for ushering in a new development. For the first time the advent of the *Gita Govinda* gave rise to a new genre and produced a forceful impetus for the creation of sacred works essentially devotional and emotionally religious based on love and Bhakthi. In the field of religion and literature, this novel method of blending eroticism in the speculative religious thought and aesthetic appeal against the highly intellectual dry dogmas and doctrines of the day attracted several poets to write several new works on the lines of the *Gita Govinda*.

Varied Emulations

The innovative form which Jayadeva chose for his *magnum opus* and the new ideal that he set motivated a host of scholars from different regions of the country to compose numerous works during various periods in emulation of the masterpiece giving vent to their poetical ingenuity and erotic devotional ecstasy. As many as 126 such imitations of the *Gita Govinda* in Sanskrit are presently available, all of them being products of inspiration from the external artistic beauty and internal appeal of the masterpiece. Well-known works belonging to this class include the *Sivashtapadi*, *Skandashtapadi*, *Ramash-tapadi*, *Gita Sundaram* etc., of different authors. Like the *Gita Govinda*, most of these imitations too have Krishna as the central character. Others, on the other hand, adhere to the form but change the object of worship according to the particular inclination of the poet.

Thus there are some which have Lord Siva as the central character like *Gita Gangadhara*, *Gita Gaurisa*, *Gita Sankara*, *Gita Digambara*, *Gita Girisa* etc., There are still others which have Sri Rama as the central character such as *Sangitha Raghunandanam*, *Rama Gita Govindam*,

Sangitha Raghavam, etc, by different authors. The theme, however, differs considerably among these different works. For instance, the *Rama Gita Govindam* of the Oriyan poet, Mighila Jayadeva, recently edited by Sri S. Vasudevan with a foreward by the late Sangitha Kalanidhi Dr. S. Ramanathan, does not embrace the Madhura Bhakthi aspect at all and its 24 Ashtapadis in 6 Sargas just describe the different episodes of the Ramayana. So also the 19th century *Sangitha Raghavam* by Gangadhar of Nagpur just relates the story of the Ramayana in Ashtapadis spread over 6 cantos. But it is the *Sangitha Raghavam* or *Ramashtapadi* composed in the 18th century by Ramakavi of Srirangapatna near Mysore that is based on Nayaka- Nayika Bhava on the lines of Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda* but with Lord Rama as the object of worship.

A Force of Inspiration, A Model for Individual Conduct

It is the two great epics the Ramayana and the Mahabaratha centering around Vishnu's two greatest Avatars, Rama and Krishna respectively that filled the minds of the people with the idea of a compassionate but all powerful God ruling over the destinies of man.

These epics gave a fresh sanction and impetus to popular devotion to God in the incarnations of Rama and Krishna and both the depth and extent of such devotion was influenced by emphasis on the personal characteristics of the objects of worship. Of all the 10 Avatars of God it has been in those of Rama and Krishna that the establishment of righteousness was a visible purpose actually accomplished by the Avatar Himself by His word and deed, His precept and example.

No epic on earth other than the Ramayana has given to a whole nation and its teeming millions such an exalted per-

sonality, who, despite the passage of ages, still remains a force of inspiration and model for individual conduct as well as public life and the mere mention of whose name even now thrills, draws tears of joy and makes people breakdown. Lord Rama is acclaimed as the best and noblest among Vishnu's 10 incarnations - in fact the Purna Avathar. The *Ananda Ramayana* mentions at three places that the speciality of Rama Avathar is due to Rama's three fold vow one word, one arrow and one wife. The same concept is brought out with telling effect by Saint Tyagaraja in his Harikambhoji piece *Oka Mata Oka Bana Oka Patni*. As such it is perhaps debatable how appropriate it could be to have Lord Rama as the central character in a composition essentially based on Madhura Bhava and Prema Bhakthi.

Sangitha Raghavam of Rama Kavi, otherwise known as *Ramashtapadi*, has recently been edited and published by Sri Sankara Ganapathi Pathak of the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore. The colophones in the manuscript bear the name *Sangitha Raghavam* only.

Rama Kavi was the poet at the court of Dalavoy Devaraya of Srirangapatna near Mysore. Devaraya was the Commander-in-Chief of the Mysore army during the reign of Chinna Krishna Raja Wodeyar who ruled Mysore from 1734 to 1766, just prior to the advent of Haider Ali. A lot of information is available regarding the valour and benevolence of the patron, but very little is known about Rama Kavi himself when he met Devaraya and how long he stayed at his court. The poet speaks of Peripura as the place of his birth and this probably refers to the modern Periyapatna in Mysore district.

Sangitha Raghavam is modelled on the *Gita Govinda* in style, plot and setting of the Ragas but still it has its own originality and beauty in the handling of the language

and the imitation of the masterpiece does not cramp the author's poetic ability. The description of the pangs of separation of the hero and the heroine are as charming and poignant as in the *Gita Govinda*. The flow of dancing words appropriate to the situation bears testimony to the author's skill.

Rama Kavi exhibits his deep devotion to Rama and Sita, the hero and heroine of the Gitakavya, through his vivid poetic imagination coupled with his scholarship. At its beginning he has summarised the story of the Ramayana in 20 Tripadis.

Sangitha Raghavam comprises 5 Sargas and 24 Ashtapadis. There are no titles for the Sargas. All except one Ashtapadi are assigned Ragas 18 in all. Tala, however, is given only for the first 2 Ashtapadis.

The 1st Sarga begins with an account of Lord Rama following his triumphant return from Lanka. While moving about a sportive mood in the pleasure garden on a moonlit night of the spring season, Rama enters into a thick bower. Going deep into it he is enticed by the clusters of creepers therein. Thereupon Sita is afflicted, being unable to bear the pangs of separation from her beloved even for a moment. Her confidant, the Sakhi, then speaks to her about Rama who is away. She describes Rama's conduct with the creepers as though with women and he bewails that being overpowered by Kama, Rama seems to have lost his mental balance.

The gist of Sarga II is as follows : It appears as though the creepers too are responding to Rama's overtures. Then, tormented by Kama, Sita expresses to the Sakhi her desire for Rama's company. She ponders how she could win over Rama engrossed with Jayalakshmi. He must have gone perhaps due to some lapse or act of commission or omission on her part. She

beseeches the Sakhi to appease Rama and bring him to her. At the same time, being unable to know about Sita's whereabouts, Rama too becomes worried. He wonders how she had the heart to leave him who was guiltless. On account of separation from her the cool southern breeze does not bring him pleasure and he looks upon even the moon as the scorching midday sun.

Sarga III commences with the Sakhi reaching the tormented Rama and apprising him of Sita's plight. She bemoans that Sita looks upon her friend as a wild animal, spurns even a wreath of lilies as of cinders and is so exhausted that she cannot walk even a step. Having heard about Sita's condition from the Sakhi, Rama sends her back to fetch Sita.

The gist of Sarga IV is as follows: While awaiting Rama's arrival, Sita wonders what could have detained him. When Sita sees the Sakhi returning alone she thinks that Vijayalakshmi must be far more attractive than herself. She regrets that her husband had become very hard-hearted and expresses to the Sakhi the fervent hope that Rama would be back without further delay.

Sarga V starts with Rama's return to find the angered Sita silent without uttering a word. When he tries to console her she

points out to him the marks on his body and questions him about them. At that point the Sakhi admonishes Sita that it is not the occasion for indictment and advises her to forget the matter and enjoy her husband's company in the spring season. However Sita is not moved by the Sakhi's pleadings. When Rama himself tries again to appease her, Sita does not relent but once more comes out with the lapse on his part. Pacifying Sita with sweet words Rama enters the creeper bower. The Sakhi too prevails upon Sita to reciprocate her husband's love. Making up her mind to patch up with Rama, Sita dresses herself up and goes into the bower. She looks at Rama with love and tears of joy roll down her cheek. Her friends inside the bower go out on one pretext or other and Rama and Sita are united once again.

Adverting to the propriety of having Rama as the central character in a Gita Kavya based on Madhura Bhava, the vital point is that the episodes take place after Rama's triumphant return from Lanka. As such he is Jayarama or Vijayarama and the other woman Jayalakshmi or Vijayalakshmi is just Sita herself who was responsible for Rama's victory over Ravana. As such Rama's integrity and vow of one wife is kept up.

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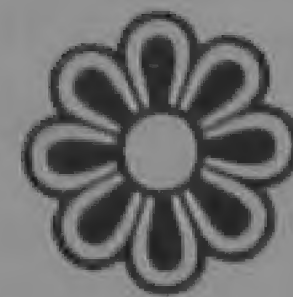
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"Gnanananda Tirtha"

Gnanananda Tirtha - the name rings a familiar note in contemporary music. A Vaggeyakara of this century he has been a familiar figure among musicians of the older generation. The younger ones are yet to feel his genius so as to make an effort to learn his compositions.

Gnanananda Tirtha's songs are simple in text, elegant in structure and texture and lofty in ideals. They can reach the lay and touch the hearts of the informed. Melody is fluent and it strikes the right Bhava in the right tone. For they are the outcome of an 'unconscious' effort, a divine gift. Gnanananda Tirtha was one of those chosen Nadayogis to whom composing "came as a divine gift".

"I am no lyricist; nor have I any poetic flair. Yet whatever composition flowed from me was providential, a miracle which just 'occured' by the Divine Grace of Goddess Gayathri," he once humbly confessed.

Talent & Training

But the life at home, the training and honing he had, had a different story to tell. Born in an orthodox family of Vedic Scholars, to Srirama Murthy and Mahalakshmi at Dhenuvakonda Village in Prakasam District, Ongole on 23.3.1908, Ogirala Veera Raghava Sarma had all the makings of the scholar-musician right from his childhood. He had his lessons in Vedas and Sastras taught at home. The honing had its desired effect making him a child scholar. Music was his passion right from the beginning. He had the fortune of taking initial lessons in music from his maternal uncle, Kundurti Ramamurthy Bhagavathar and his disciple Kandeti Anjaneya Sastri. Later he came under the tutelage of Hari Nagabhushanam of Machlipatnam and Chitti Peddi Ramachandramurthy of

Madras. The training sharpened his imagination and inspired his musical impulse.

A significant turning point took place in the life of Sarma when he turned 15, and met the great Gayathri Upasaka Srinathananda at Srikalahasti. Already absorbed in the essence and efficacy of Gayathri Japa since his Upanayana, Srinathananda's Upadesa intensified the lad's devotion to the Devi and solidified his conviction in the Japa. The Guru ordered his Chela to worship Gayathri Devi without seeking any material gains in return and imposed certain restrictions to be observed throughout his life. The chela, Sarma, surrendered unto the Devi. Pleased by his devotion the spiritual Guru christened him "Gnanananda Tirtha." But cautioned him not to use it immediately but wait till the propitious moment. (That moment came only in his 72nd year when the Guru himself ordained him to adopt it.) Little did the lad dream then that he was to become one of the gifted composers of his time.

It was the training that he under went at the feet of Hari Nagabhushanam that carved the musician he became. It had a great impact on him, moulding his Manodharma, and refining his presentation. Sarma began his performing career in Madras and won recognition at the Mecca of Music. Music became his very lifestream. He worshipped the Music Trinity and revered Saint Tyagaraja as Sangeetha Jagadguru and included him in his Nitya Puja.

The compositions he later on composed had much in common with the Saint's creations. Steeped in Bhakti, they breathed life into melody and lyrics as well as in their structure. He was a Nishkama Bhakta. That is why he could compose so

fluently and spontaneously, says his son Ramakrishna, a Geophysicist.

It may be said that Sarma had quite a substantial repertoire from various Vaggeyakaras, before he was inspired into composing himself. He was rendering them with intense devotion. Rather he was meditating in music. A Gayathri Upasaka that he became, he established Gayathri Panchayatana Peetam and conducted Navarathri Puja every year till his Siddhi. And he firmly believed that it was Her Grace and his Guru's blessings that compositions 'occurred' to him.

It was around 1939. One fine day when he was doing his Gayathri Dhyana there flowed a composition *Kavave Kamalakshi* in Jaganmohini. That was the beginning. The 'flow' of composition became steady materialising as and when he was inspired or provoked by incidents or when he went into ecstasy or agony or even remorse. The outpourings were not only sermons and preaching, they were advice to humanity, admonition to the erring brethren and contained philosophic truism.

"I do not lay any claims to my originality in my works inasmuch as I was inspired to write and the words followed spontaneously. I have no further explanation to offer but to state that these are the words of the Goddess intended for the world and I am fortunate enough to be the medium of communication. I possess no special knowledge nor any training in writing. But the Goddess has endowed with me these, to communicate to the world some of Her ideas. It might perhaps sound a little egoistic. But I humbly submit that such thoughts are far from my mind and I have endeavoured my best so as to be frank enough to make my narrative lucid."

Emphasising that music is not only an art for entertaining the people but certainly a mode to Salvation, Sarma composed in *Kharaharapriya Nādanandanubhava Chaliki Nanavida Yoni Jananabhatalundune Manasa*. That the Raga in which it is composed, the primordial Sama Gana mode, is to be noted.

It is said that Ogirala Veera Raghava Sarma was the first to compose a Kriti on divine mother Gayathri. He was a devotee who never made any pilgrimage to any temple town or temples. Yet he had visions of various deities such as Kanchi Kamakshi, Kasi Annapoorna which inspired him into Song-pourings. One such is *Devi Kamakshi* in Mayamalavagoula. Legend goes that Goddess Kamakshi approached him as a small girl and requested him to compose a song and thus was born *Devi Kamakshi*.

"Those which were God-intoxicated were always soulful" says his son with a rightful pride. One more example to cite is: It was the last of the Navarathri day, Sarma saw a divine form of Goddess seated on tiger skin with a book on Vyasapeeta. He begged her for Mantradana. With a graceful simile, SHE blessed him with a 3-letter word ordaining him to chant it always. Soon came the song *Pinnava niga Nannu Pilachi Brovave Bhavani* in Mayamalavagoula.

Contemplating once on the spiritual and sterling qualities of his Guru Srinathananda, Sarma sang *Sadguru Charana Saroruha Bhakti* in Behag.

In the preface to his book *Sri Devi Ganasudha* (1986 edition) the composer had narrated select incidents which inspired him to compose some of his Keertanas.

A Friday after his Puja at Devi Sannidhana. Sarma sang *Devi Gayathri* in Useni (a spontaneous outpour like the rest). Some in the gathering started pestering him to teach them the Mantropadesa! Could it be possible? While trying to convince them about its futility that mere learning and reciting of Mantras would lead nowhere least of all the Almighty and that would amount to only self-deception, there emanated a kriti in Arabhi, *Ooraka Dorakuna Umapada Sarasijamu*.

Sarma was in the habit of rendering Nama Sankeertana in solitude, a practice he often resorted to and very much cherished. On one such occasion he noticed some people assembled to listen to him engaged in talking which was not only disturbing but irritating. He abruptly concluded the Sankeertana and distributed Prasadam. And the event resulted in *Yoga Sukha Viyogunaku Anuragamu Etu Janinchu* in Atana, a Raga expressive enough of his irritation and anguish.

His life was not all that smooth and unruffled. Temptations and tribulations did confront him now and then and it was Gayathri Upasana that helped him tide over them. His son says; once his father was offered a post of music teacher at Kaulalumpur and after much persuasion by friends he agreed to go. However during his meditation when he sang *Ontariga Videsamulakanupaka Na Venta Ravalenamma* in Vachaspati imploring the Divine Mother to be with him and 'accompany' him like a shadow, he had a vision of the Goddess rejecting his request and advising him to proceed to Kovvur for teaching assignment! And he obeyed shifting his residence from Rapalle which till then was his home.

Though a Nishkama Bhakta and a devotee leading a simple and humble life Sarma was a Grihasta and was not free of the problems of life. Which disturbed his mental equilibrium. At such moments compositions like *Kala Vikrutamuna Palabatu Kashtajalamulaku Bhayamelane Manasa* in Varali gave him solace. The choice of the Raga highlighting the situation, Sahitya and Bhava is to be noted here.

One more occasion when he was disturbed was when he saw people weeping over a corpse When he went to bathe in the Godavari. There 'occurred' a song *Epudaina Bhinna Mandanikoraku* in Khamas. He questions, "Why so much

importance to this body that is perishable? Is it not Atma that is eternal?" The composer, we learn, had nothing to note down the song with, and used a charcoal lying nearby and wrote it on the floor of the river bund.

Sarma was one of the composers who himself notated his compositions and taught his students too. At a time when the 'flow' of compositions was more or less constant he was suddenly gripped with a fear if they were Lakshana-wise correct and free of "dosha". He sang before his Sangeetha Guru Hari Nagabhushanarn and got his doubts cleared. Not only did his Guru approve of his creations but was also overwhelmed with the structure and Sahitya which he said could not have been possible without divine blessings.

The devoted chela, as a mark of respect, dedicated his first publication of *Devi Ganasudha* comprising a Tana Varanam and 27 Kritis to his Guru in 1947 on the occasion of his Shashtiabdapoorthi.

Mostly set in Madhyamakala, Sarma's compositions had a touch of subtle embellishments such as Swaraksharas, Yati etc., (eg., *Kamakshisada* - Todi) which enhanced the beauty and Bhava of the songs and reflected his lucidity in lyrics. He handled some rare Talas like Sankeerna Triputa (*Parasakti Sada* - Todi, *Sara Hrudayulaina Janaranjani*), Khanda Triputa (*Valasitanemi Ritigaula*), besides the conventional Adi, Rupaka, Jhampa etc.

Ragas like Pranavapriya and Srinathananda Ranjani were his creations, the former an Audava-Shadava derivative of Simhendramadhyamam omitting Gandhara and Dhaivata in the Arohana and Dhaivata in the Avarohana, and the latter a Vakra Raga, an offshoot of Harikambhoji, the Arohana being Vakra with Dhaivata-Nishada omitted and Avarohana Sampoor-na. The compositions *Padaravindamule*

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Gatiyani and *Parathpari Siva* respectively lucidly bring image of the respective Ragas.

It was not until his spiritual Guru Sri Nathananda gave him formal permission that Sarma used Gnanananda Tirtha as his Mudra. His first song with this Ankitam was *Manasa Sadasiva Manini* in Suruti (1982). About 8 songs with this signature are found in the edition of *Devi Ganasudha* brought out in 1986. Till then Raghava was his Mudra. He is said to have composed one Tana Varnam and 85 songs.

Gnanananda's compositions have been uniformly acclaimed by musicologists and musicians of the elder generation; like T.L. Venkatarama Iyer, Prof P. Sambamoorthy, Vinjamuri Varadaraja Iyengar, Musiri, Chittoor Subramania Pillai Bangalore Nagaratnammal. And G.N.B. Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, D.K. Pattammal, D.K. Jayaraman and others had sung his compositions in concerts. However it is the commendation of Nagaratnammal, a Tyagaraja devotee and DKP that he cherished most.

Behind every successful man is a woman, goes the saying. And it was his Patni Pitchamamba who patiently served him and motivated him in his mission. Though not herself well educated, she was

"Patience, contentment and devotion" personified, he once remarked. Another person who had been very helpful was his devoted disciple Dharwada Hanumantha Rao, whose "devotion and sterling character" the Guru could never stop hailing

Despite their popularity during his life time, there seems to be a lull in the rendition of his songs. Could it be because he did not sell his *Devi Ganasudha* but just gifted away? It may be pointed out that it was not for material wealth that he composed, published and taught his songs free. But when he heard his song rendered by a musician over the radio with the Mudra, Raghava, changed to the musician's own he decided to publish them

However some ray of hope is seen in the efforts of Sunadamala group of Hyderabad in bringing to light his compositions, rich in spiritual and devotional fervour.

The young star performers of today who have a flair for adding to their repertoire could learn and practise them so that the Bhakti-oriented songs could be kept alive.

*(Compiled from the sources with
Shri Ramakrishna)*



Meteoric Rise and Frustrated Wishes

By 'Garland' Rajagopalan

Worldly wise, the boy queried, "What is your fortune?" With rustic innocence, she confessed, "My face is my fortune". The boy was no Santanu Maharaj to accept her at her 'face' value alone and dismissed her with a curt remark, "Then I shall not marry you". With native naivety, the lightning sally, "Nobody asked you to" threw him out.

That was in the ballad "Milkmaid". But here, the rustic daughter of poor, discarded Balambal of Kodumudi on the bank of the Cauvery was no Cinderella. She sang for a paisa to satisfy the qualms of hunger of her mother and herself. Yes, she was a street singer for bare livelihood. If her tender face was not her fortune, she was blest with Heaven's rare gift of a sterling, melodic voice. Her virtuous tone traversed effortlessly through the octaves with ravishing felicity with rapturous and consistent timbre. Ramakrishna Paramahansa mentioned that the 'Homa' bird delighted in spending its life in the stratosphere never caring to come down. This girl was a musical Homa bird whose bewitching voice explored the fascinating labyrinths of melody in the upper octave in all its dizzy heights with verve and felicity. For seven decades the unmatched tone held total sway over hearts of the lay and the cognoscenti and continued to do so still!

Melody Weds Melody

That was K.B. Sundarambal who strode like a Colossus. The first turn in the life of the street-singer came when R.S. Krishnaswamy Ayyar, Superintendent of Police, Karur, with understandable solicitude got her, just ten years then, admitted into the dramatic troupe of veteran P.S. Velu Nair,

in one of whose dramas the author had acted. Fortune, when deigns, even rips open the ceiling to confer its grace, says the proverb. For her, it came in the person of the Prince Charming and Undisputed Master of Stage, S.G. Kittappa (1906-1933).

When he heard the lilting voice of Sundarambal, he surrendered his robust musical heart to the tone, the alluring voice. He was no Dushyant. Brahmin Kittappa, then just twenty-one and riding the crest of popularity, embraced the twenty-year old Sundarambal in matrimony. It was a marriage of grace, of the pure elements of air and fire, of blissful melodies. This second turn came in 1927 in the eventful life of Sundarambal.

Music Sweet & Sacred

When melody weds melody, what else a music-crazy public could aspire for? SGK-KBS mesmerised the public with the elixir of captivating, enchanting music. History holds out few parallels. South India and Sri Lanka went mad after their music and all the air was full of their glory, that had no earth or water in it! 1927-1933 was the Golden Age of Tamil Drama. Of course, there were others who were great but the crown was for the couple. The couple dished out celestial music and looted the hearts of the people and their fabulous emotions too. The charming atmosphere was too grand to last long. There was some harsh coincidence in numbers too. Kittappa who married Sundarambal in '27 died at the impressionable age of 27! Cruel Fate robbed her of her spouse and the nation of the enchanting voice and the void is there still!



K.B. Sundarambal giving a Concert in the third stage of her memorable life. Her patron deity, Lord Muruga is seen near the ghatam artiste

The stunned Lady of the Stage, Sundarambal quietly donned the white saree and had the sacred ash on her forehead and retired from the stage dominated till then by her benefactor and spouse. The girl from ditch and rags rose to the highest pedestal of Indian womanhood. People admired her fortitude, her sense of gratitude and sacred values. She sternly declined to ascent the dramatic stage without her Romeo but was persuaded to give concerts. That was the third turn in her life. She was not equipped with the grammar of music (*Lakshanas*); hers was *Lakshya Sangit* of absolute sweetness and fragrance. At concerts flowed divine melody as if all the panels of the Stanley Reservoir at Mettur had been left open.

She acted in eight films; *Avvaiyar* and *Nandanar* were her *memorabilia*. Songs like *Jnanap pazhaittaip pizhindu*, *Thanit-tirundu vazhum* and *Vennir anindadenna* are superlative hits. She espoused the cause of the Independence Movement and

was even arrested. The Government of Tamil Nadu nominated her to the Legislative Council and Tamil Isai Sangham honoured her with the title of Isai Perarignar. She lived with honour and fame till she died on September 24, 1980.

A life of superlative success was followed by frustration of her sacred wishes. She hoarded a fortune guided with a noble vision of extending charities, etc. She did create a Trust in her name by document no. 6880/1975 and transferred all the properties to it. She confirmed it in her registered will and specified the causes and objects for which the Trust should be run. Alas, on her death, by process of *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, the documents were suppressed and the trust which came into being was throttled. The Government have been informed. Her sacred wishes stand frustrated and the voice of the Angel of Melody cries for the resuscitation of the Trust!

Music of the Purest & Delightful Vintage

BY K.S MAHADEVAN

Flute Maestro, the late T.R. Mahalingam, was a fabulously gifted musician, who was regarded as a genius in the category of Nagaswara Vidwan T.N. Rajaratnam, Bharata Natya artist T.N. Balasaraswathi and Mridangam maestro Palghat Mani Iyer. Mali's genius shone forth like a beacon atop a tower. He held his audiences in thrall when melodious notes cascaded from his divine flute and waves of melody enveloped his hearers in a deep spell, that lingered in the hearts of his ardent Rasikas long after the concert was over.

Mali gave his first concert at the age of seven during the Tyagaraja Festival at Mylapore in Madras. Born on 6th November 1926, by the age of 14, he was an established performer, with senior artists like Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai Papa Venkatramaiah and T. Chowdiah accompanying him on the Violin and great Mridangam maestros like Azhaganambika Pillai, Palghat Mani Iyer, accompanying him. Till his death on 30th May 1986, on return from New Delhi, where he had gone to attend a function in connection with the release of a Commemorative Volume of Music to mark the Festival of India, Flute Mali had none to challenge his high status. He was unmoved by the fleeting changes in the format of cutcheris and stood like a rock holding aloft the banner of Karnatak Bani-a subject on which he has written articles to explain what it means.

He was always evolving newer techniques to make the flute approximate to vocal effects and much of his irresistible appeal was due to his inimitable flair for producing the great Gamakas that distinguish Karnatak Music and set it apart so uniquely. His song versions were highly disciplined, being based on the finest classical "patan-tharas". When Mali played a song, he became the song himself and the instrument became the fascinating vehicle of glides, oscillations, Asaivus, delicate nuan-

ces and similar graces in the highest degree.

Mandara His Patented Territory

Although he could faultlessly traverse the higher octave notes with unsurpassed accuracy-which is no mean feat as his Sruti was 5½ Kattai-yet, Mali was at his best in the Manhara Sthayi (the lower register). It was a patented territory for him. In it, his tone was so ripe and mellow, his Bhava so penetrating, that he often sent his listeners into a trance from which they were loath to be awakened. Such was the power of his genius. And the complete control of Kalapramana even in such Vilamba. kala slots as he attempted made him often the despair of Laya Vidwans. His Pallavis were often thought of on the spur of the moment and yet they could be complex and teasing. His Alapanas of Ragas may be likened to the flow of the mighty Ganges, the same depth and breadth and the majestic flow, that puts it above all other rivers. Professional and layman alike could note in his Raga essays the strength of musical integrity, excellence and tradition.

He possessed the extra-ordinary genius to establish the unique and matchless quality and stature of Karnatak Music on the one hand and the range and depth of aesthetic and emotional experience on the other. He was truly great. He gave unalloyed pleasure to music buffs.

He honoured the Sangeet Natak Academy by accepting its Award in 1965. Characteristically, he declined the Padma Bhushan Award in 1986.

By honouring his memory today, we are only reaffirming our commitment and dedication to Karnatak Music of the purest and most delightful vintage.

Madhyamavati

By S. Ramachandran

Madhyamavati is the consummation point of a concert. Conventional concert practice denotes that after 'Managalam', the melody of Madhyamavati is briefly outlined and the cutcheri comes to a full stop. It is sung for the sheer harmony and sweetness of the built-in notes of the melody. The musician hereby tries to efface all unpleasant effects caused by him during the concert. It also testifies to his feeling of regret which he proclaims in sincere humility. In other words, the Raga inheres in the nature of its notes a pleasurable finale to the concert. Thus explains the tradition.

Our ancients preferred to call this Raga 'Madhyamadi'. They kept "MA" as the fundamental note in respect of this Raga. The name 'Madhyamadi' by itself would mean the 'beginning & middle'. We may note that the end is excluded. In the exercise of man's thinking process, the mode assumed connotations of endlessness or infinity. No musician would like a summary end, as such, to his career; hence the reason that the musician sings it with a fervour of devotion and prayer in order that his talent would grow into dimensions higher and higher.

Critical Appreciation

It is to note that the name Madhyamadi in subsequent years got changed to Madhyamavati. Tyagaraja's *Alakalalladaga* is an excellent piece for appreciation. The context refers to sage Viswamitra who was lost in raptures as he gazed at the curly forelocks caressing on Rama's face. The backdrop points to the sequence that (a) Maricha was thrashingly overcome and (b) Rama broke Siva's bow in obedience to what the Sage indicated by the gesture of

his eye. Instantly Viswamitra became aware that Rama was perceptibly a divine form. For Viswamitra, it was a transcendental vision of God Himself. Tyagaraja's genius in interpreting Valmiki's Ramayana on the basis of the sequences involved through this song in just a few words, admittedly, is rather profound for any comparison.

Inspired Lyricism

The lyrical artistry of the poem is unexampled. The choice of words profiling the sage Viswamitra besides other sequences speak abundantly that Tyagaraja was an inspired muse born to produce the highest quality of art which is at once suggestive and free from confusion. The more one delves and handles the poem, the greater the freshness and import one experiences. The lyrical import of the poem has been so skilfully fused into the lineaments of the Raga Madhyamavati that a similar integration is hardly available in the poetry of any other musical repertoire.

Sangathis are a unique contribution original to Tyagaraja. They nourish Karnatak Music giving it a character. Sangathis precisely enrich the 'Bhava' of the composition. They provide musician the freedom to place due stress on the lyrical content while ensuring emotional appeal. It is particularly so in Vilamba elaboration. The musical phrase "adagagani" set to notation "ree, ri mariri sa saa ri" is typical of the gamaka, so indispensable to Karnatak style. Again, in the Anupallavi "Cheluvumeera ganu", what is portrayed is the state of transcendental happiness experienced by Viswamitra. Most aptly, Tyagaraja indicates soaring heights in the manner of "sa sa ri ri mariri sa sa" in Thara Sthayi.

Musical Workmanship

When we analyse the Rasas which have gone into the making of the song, we find that Sringara, Vira and Adbhuta' rasas are predominant. Sringara is the positive lyrical appeal contained in the song providing a sense of fulfilment, Vira and Adbhuta Rasas are clear in the light of the heroism and valour exhibited by Rama while overpowering Maricha in combat and Siva's bow crumbling to pieces, respectively. It is to note that the sharp use of 'ree, pa, nee, saa, etc, in the Thara Sthayi exclusive to the Raga, Madhyamavati, has been effectively brought out in this composition. Lastly, we come to 'Santa Rasa' where we experience the highest order of spirituality and bliss of mind, as the phrase 'Edu ponganu' would imply. Tyagaraja's choice of Madhyamavati for this outpouring of thought is most appropriate.

Ethical Import

As stated earlier, at the end of the concert, Madhyamavati is the ultimate musical note every musician adopts. At this, he seeks forgiveness for mistakes on his part as a humble prelude, while seeking the much coveted happiness of the mind.

From point of view of Hindu philosophy, the ultimate is the spiritual happiness one achieves a matter of deliverance from earthly ties and not to be re-born. As for sage Viswamitra, it was an experience of happiness on realising the immaculate divinity of Rama. For the ordinary musician of the world, it is an opportunity provided by Tyagaraja in the spiritual direction. The direction is amplified in that it enjoins on him to sing Madhyamavati, as a final note at the end of the kutcheri. Hereby, (a) he seeks atonement for his slips in pursuing his devout avocation and (b) he seeks ultimate bliss of identification with God.

Needless to reiterate that Tyagaraja has revealed his lofty stature of musical genius in his apt choice of Madhyamavati for this poem. The theme conveyed in the song is particularly significant. The unique experience of Viswamitra in his transcendental vision of Rama's God form has been described in a manner which is above all comparisons and shades. One would feel that Madhyamavati is the chosen ideal medium to convey the philosophical aspects of life. It is implied that Madhyamavati would stand out braving the ravages and onslaughts of time.

"Magnetic Forward Pull of Music"

"Music, unlike the other arts, with the possible exception of dancing, gives pleasure simultaneously on the lowest and highest level of apprehension. All of us... can understand and feel the joy of being carried forward by the flow of music. Our love of music is bound with its forward motion; nonetheless it is precisely the creation of the sense of flow, its interrelation with and resultant effect upon formal structure, that calls forth high intellectual capacities of a composer, and offers keen pleasures for listening minds. Music's incessant movement forward exerts a double and contradictory fascination; on the one hand it appears to be immobilising time itself by filling out a specific temporal space, while generating at the same moment the sensation of flowing past us with all the pressure and sparkle of a great river."

Aaron Copland

Sruti Honours City Natyacharya

Tradition in Bharata Natyam and Guru T.K. Mahalingam Pillai have become almost synonymous today. For Guru Mahalingam Pillai has been unswerving and uncompromising in imparting traditional tradition traditionally. Guru Mahalingam Pillai has come to stand for certain values, principles in the art of teaching and presenting Bharata Natyam so that to this day the Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir glows in a glory all its own while entering grandly into its golden jubilee this year.

After Kamala Narayanan (nee Laxman), Kalakshetra and Bhanumathi (as also her late sister Varalakshmi), it was only apt that Guru Mahalingam Pillai was elected by the Sruti Foundation, Madras, for the award of the E.Krishna Iyer Medal for 1994. The Medal is awarded to an individual or organisation that has made a significant contribution to the preservation and promotion of Bharata Natyam traditions. The Medal was established in 1989 in memory of the late E. Krishna Iyer who had played a key role in reviving Sadir (the dance which later came to be known as Bharata Natyam) when it was threatened with virtual extinction.

The award was presented to Guru Mahalingam Pillai by the grand old musician Sri Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer at the Music Academy, Madras on the 9th of May last. The simple and austere function took-off with the traditional lighting of the lamp by Sri V.P. Dhananjayan. Shri N. Pattabhi Raman, the Editor-in-Chief of Sruti, the magazine for music and dance published from Madras, then explained the of the award. The chief of the Bombay bureau of Sruti, Dr. Vimala Sarma, then spoke about Guruji and his contribution to Bharata Natyam. Guruji and Sruti were commended for their efforts by Shri T.T. Vasu, President of the Music Academy.

K.J. Sarasa, a recognised Guru of Bharata Natyam, lauded Guruji's contribution to the art-form and his role as a stickler

of tradition. She opined that the Rajarajeswari team of Gurus were lucky in a sense. Being in a city like Bombay they had become well established. She pointed that there were many who were somehow managing and struggling sometimes to make a living yet continuing their work in whatever measure they could and who required all support if the art had to grow. Her outburst seemed to hint at the intensity of a situation that demanded attention.

Later many dance institutions and dancers and other notable personalities offered their floral compliments to Guruji. Notable among these were-the Dhananjayans, Smt. Kalanidhi Narayanan, Lakshmi Vishwanathan, K.J. Sarasa, the Bhagavatha Mela Nataka troupe of Melattur, Susheela Raman, Sudharani Raghupathy Sunil Kothari and others.

The function concluded with a humble speech of thanks by Guruji who was overwhelmed to have received the award at the hands of Semmangudi. In fact, he stated that when the venue for the function was shifted to Madras from Bombay he had suggested that he would prefer to receive it at the hands of none other than this great personage.

Even at 75 plus, Guruji continued to perform his sacred duty of imparting he tradition of Bharata Natyam. He humbly says "The award is not mine, it is for Bharatha Natyam".

The award function was followed by the video screening of the edited version of Guruji's presentation at the National Seminar on Bharata Natyam Dance traditions conducted by the Sruti Foundation in December 1989 at Madras. It was one of the most systematic and educative presentations. The video first covered the various groups or adavus (basic steps of Bharatha Natyam) followed by a brief presentation of core items where the full display of the adavus and their combination could be seen.

Nandini Krishna.

Thaalavaadyothsav

The 5-day Annual Thaalavaadyothsav, the Percussive Arts Festival cum-Conference, from 27 to 31st May this year was notable for several unique events slated therein. Apart from the routine concerts and lec-dems, two specific programmes stood out viz., the birth centenaries of two great percussionists, Thavil (Dolu) wizard Needamangalam Meenakshisundaram Pillai and the great Mridangam maestro Tanjore Vaidyanatha Iyer. Several features highlighted the celebration of Meenakshisundaram Pillai's birth anniversary. His disciple Mannar gudi Rajagopala Pillai was felicitated by his illustrious disciple Valayapatti Subramaniam. Versatile Thavil artistes Haridwaramangalam A. K. Palanivel and Tanjore Govindarajan rendered a Laya Vinyasa in the complicated Cycle of 11 counts 6 1/2+4 1/2. Explanation was offered by the noted musicologist B.M. Sundaram, the son of Meenakshisundaram Pillai. A Monograph on Pillai was also released by N. S. Krishnamurthy, Station Director, All India Radio, Bangalore. In addition to a Nagaswara recital by Thiruvizha Jayashankar, Valayapatti Subramaniam presented a unique feature with his deft handling of Thavil, supported by Nagaswara by Thiruvizha Jayashankar and a Bharatha Natya recital by Padmini Ravi and her talented disciples. The Thani Avarthanam of Thavil by Subramaniam & Valayapatti Malarvann was exemplary.

The celebrations of the birth centenary of Tanjore Vaidyanatha Iyer, the guru of the all time great Palghat Mani Iyer, was marked by a felicitation to Tanjore T.K. Murthy by Dr. Raja Ramanna on his having been conferred the Sangeetha Kalanidhi by the Music Academy, Madras, last December. A monograph on Vaidyanatha

Iyer was released by S.N. Chandrashekar, Art Critic. Vijay Siva demonstrated some old-time Pallavis narrated by T.K. Murthy, accompanied by B.U. Ganeshprasad on Violin and T.K. Murthy on Mrudangam. Vijay Siva also gave a delectable vocal recital with B.K. Venkataram (Violin) Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma (Mrudangam) and M.A. Krishnamurthy (Ghata). T.A.S. Mani and B.N. Chandramouli gave a Laya Vinyasa in Khanda Dhruva Tala. T.K. Murthy gave a Lecture demonstration on the "Tanjore School of Mrudangam" play while Art critic S. Ramachandran played several rare audio-tapes of Palghat Mani Iyer to drive home the Tanjore style of Mrudangam. R.K. Padmanabha & D.V. Nagarajan gave a vocal duet with S.Seshagiri Rao (Violin), T.K. Murthy on (Mrudangam) and H.P. Ramachar (Kanjira).

The other concerts included vocal recitals by S. Shankar and T.S. Sathyavathy with the "LAYA LAHARI" Percussion ensemble of Ayyanar College of Music, Bangalore.

On 27th May, Hon B.T. Lalitha Naik, Minister for Culture, Government of Karnataka presented the PALANI SUBRAMANIA PILLAI AWARD (donated by Ramasudha Charitable Trust, Dr. A.H. Rama Rao & Sudha Rao) to Mrudanga artist T.A.S. Mani, a citation and Birudu Pathra conferring 'Laya Kalaa Nipuna' and released a monograph 'Vishwa Sangeetha' Prof R. Visweshwaran's a H.C.K. Bhatta Memorial Lecture. Dr. H. Narasimhiah, former Vice Chancellor inaugurated the festival while Violinist A. Veerabhadriah & Mrudangist A.V. Anand felicitated Mani. The function was followed by a Vocal recital by S. Shankar.

In the evening session on Sunday, 28th May, the H.PUTTACHAR MEMORIAL AWARD (donated by the Kanjari and Mrudanga Vidwan H.P. Ramachar) was presented to Vidwan S. Shankar by Dr. K.R. Ramachandran, former Education Secretary. H. Kamalanath, President of Bangalore Gayana Samaja released a monograph on 'Musical Trinity' K. Padmanabhan's H.C.K. Bhatta Memorial Lecture. Vocalist R.K. Srikantan and Vidwan T.N. Padmanabhan felicitated Shankar.

A Laya Vinyasa by T.A.S. Mani and B.N. Chandramouli and Vocal by Vijay Siva marked the occasion.

The Valedictory function on 31.5.1995 included the presentation by Dr K. Kasturirangan, Chairman, ISRO, of the K. Puttu Rao Memorial Palghat Mani Award (donated by K.K.Murthy) to the Thavil Vidwan Valayapatti Subramaniam. It comprised a citation and the Birudu Pathra "Thavil Kalaa Shiromani". Dr. Kasturi Rangan's scholarly Valedictory address gave an insight into the evolution of musical instruments. Dr. V.Doreswamy Iyengar and Shri R.K. Srikantan felicitated Valayapatti.

Bangalore K. Venkataram



SHANMUKHA reproduces excerpts from Dr. Kasturi Rangan's fine Nalysis:

Palghat Mani Iyer and Palani Subramanya Pillai were two legendary figures of this century, who established their unique styles of playing Mridangam and thus became role models for the present generation of Mridangam artists. Late Puttachar, another of these great Mrudangists, accorded a pride of place to Mridanga in the Karnatkk concerts in Karnataka.

Musical instruments existed in the world from time immemorial. We have evidences on the existence of musical instrument from the period of Indus Valley Civilisation. Excavations of the Centres of ancient civilisation all over the world, have yielded material proving the fact that man was a musical being even in pre-historic times. These rough instruments were improved gradually as part of the evolution of mankind and the scientific knowledge helped him to perfect these instruments which are available to the current generation. This is a continuing process and we see today how the electronics technology has been fruitfully utilised in this area.

The Naya Sastra of Bharata is still our treasure house on performing arts. In Chapter 28 the musical instruments have been classified into four groups viz., *Thatha*, (stringed instruments), *Avanaddha* (like drums), *Ghana* (solids like stick or cymbals) and *Sushira* (Wind instruments)

About a century back the organologists of the West also came up with a four-fold classification system viz, Chordophones, Membranophones, Idiophones and Aerophones, exactly what the Indian scholar put forth 2000 years ago.

The instruments belonging to *Avanaddha* (i.e. Membranophone) and *Ghana* (i.e. Idiophone) provide a wide range of possibilities for a supportive or a prime role on a concert stage, as well as a rich percussive ensemble in a religious or ceremonial functions. We have today, before us, the Vidwans who have mastered the art of playing instruments such as *Mridangam*, *Thavil*, *Ghatam*, *Khanjira*. In north India, we come across *Pakhawaj*, *Tabla* and *Dagga*, *Nagara* (Dundubhi and Bheri). Then we have the *Maddalam*, *Chenda*, *Thimila* and *Odakka* prevalent in Kerala. *Idakka* is probably one of the most interesting *Avanaddha* Vadya, and this has amazing tonal qualities and the artist can produce very fine musical tones.

Study of the musical instruments has been an important field of research in physics. In the early part of the century, Sir C.V. Raman carried out extensive research on musical instruments. The form of vibration and its harmonic content which decided the quality of the tone, received the attention of Raman. He started with research of the Violin, obviously So because he had heard

his father play on the Violin. Raman's Contribution to the physics of the Violin, were related to the Vibration modes, wolf note, role of friction between the bow and the string, influence of the bridge and measurement of the frequency response of Violin leading to Raman Curve. Subsequently he went on to study the physics of Piano, Tambura and Veena. In his study of Mridangam and Tabla. Raman illustrated using a simple model, how an inhomogenous membrane can conceivably produce overtones with harmonic relations, which explain the interesting acoustic properties of these Indian percussion instruments. Dr.Raja Ramanna in this month's one of the widely read Journals *The Current Science* has dwelt on Swara/Tala+Forms, instruments and aesthetics of Raga Music.

The Thala and Laya adopted for classical music, dance and percussive ensemble in our country are quite complex and mastery over these elements will result only from rigorous Saadhana. We had great masters like Shatkaala Givinda Marar who could handle a song in six tempos. Our sahunaly musicians handle Pallavis in extremely complicated rhythmic cycles. I was once described about the rigour that the student of Chenda has to undergo. In the initial days of training, the student has to practice all Jathis on a piece of rock using two sticks in different tempos and only after he attains efficient mastery over this, he can practice on the instrument.

Now let us see the place where Vidwan Palghat Mani was born. Palakkad has contributed immensely to the field of Karnatic Music and percussive art forms. Palakkad Parameswara Bhagavata (1815- 1892A.D.) a well known composer, was a contemporary of Swathi Thirunal Maharaja (1813-1846A.D.) and a leading member of his Darbar Palakkad Anantharama Bhagavata (1867-1919 AD) a gifted musician was Aashana Vidwan of Mysore. A number of leading musicians of this century came from Palakkad viz., Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata, M.D. Ramanathan, K.V. Narayana swamy, kalayana krishna Bhagavata and so on.

The undulating terrains of Palakkad and surroundings has probably been one of the main reasons for developing a rich percussive system in that region, using mainly Chenda, Maddalam, Timila and Idakka. In Panchavadyam, which uses five types of instruments, a rhythmic cycle of 7 counts (Thisrajathi Thripata) is used in five tempos and about 30 to 35 artists play various rhythmic passages for 2 to 3 hours. This is an illustration of synchronism of the team as well as individual's mastery. Then there is another art form called Thayampaka performed on Chenda, where the main artist performs Laya vinyasa, which will last for more than an hour. The Chendamalam is another major percussive system, employ about 100 artists and these are performed in the processions in the temple festivals.

Palghat Mani Iyer, a gifted artist, could imbibe the gust of these two rich heritages of the region and develop a school of his own. He had ably accompanied all the top ranking musicians of his days and he was known for his sharpness in anticipation and response to the passages played by the vocalist.

There is an urgent need for continuing research and documentation in the area of percussive art system so that rich heritage passed on to us through ages in the Gurukula mode, are preserved and passed to the coming generations. The initiative of the Percussive Arts Centre, in this direction is certainly laudable. I would like to once again compliment the organiser, Mr. Bangalore Venkataram and others for presenting this cultural heritage in a unique way to a larger section of the society in Bangalore which besides being a Science and Technology capital of the country is also a Cultural Capital.

Courtesy "Percussive Art"



SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA (REGD.)



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FIFTH ANNUAL TALENT PROMOTION FESTIVAL (MUSIC & DANCE) - 1995 (JUNE TO OCTOBER)

CO-SPONSORED BY : SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI
NEW DELHI

VENUE : SHANMUKHANANDA PREMISES - 1 ST FLOOR FOYER

PROGRAMME (D.V.) JUNE

10.6.1995 Saturday	Thirteen year old Master Madurai S. Krishna (Madras) (son and disciple of Shri Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan)	Vocal
6.00 P.M.	Shri R.K. Sriramkumar (Madras) Shri B. Sivaraman (Madras)	Violin Mridangam
11.6.1995 Sunday (A) 5.30 P.M.	TWO-IN-ONE PROGRAMMES Kum. Gouri Krishnamoorthy (Bombay) (Pupil of Guru Smt. Padmini Radhakrishnan of Soundarya Natya Kalalaya, Garodia Nagar)	Bharatanatyam
(B) 7.30 P.M.	Shri Prasad Venkataraman (Madras) (Prasad Venkataraman is the disciple of Shri T.M. Thiagarajan , Smt. Sulochana Pattabhiraman and his own sister Smt. Sudha Raghunathan) Smt. N. Neela (Madras) Shri Jayakumar (Madras)	Vocal Violin Mridangam

JULY

8.7.1995 Saturday (A) 5.30 P.M.	TWO-IN-ONE-PROGRAMMES Smt. Padmini Ravi (Muscat) (Initially trained by her mother Vaineeka Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy , she had advanced training under Smt. T.R. Balamani and presently receiving training under Smt. D.K. Pattammal) Shri B. Anantharaman (Bombay) Shri S. Sankaranarayanan (Bombay) Shri K. N. Gopalan (Bombay)	Vocal Violin Mridangam Morsing
(B) 7.30 P.M.	Shri Viswanath Parasuram (Bombay) (Viswanath Parasuram had his Gurukula Vasam under Vaineeka Vidwan Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy and Shri T.V. Sankaranarayanan among others Shri R. Madhavan (Bombay) Shri Sriram Subbaraman (Bombay)	Vocal Violin Mridangam
9.7.1995 Sunday 6.00 P.M.	Dr. R. Ganesh (Madras) & Party. (a Verternarian by profession and belonging to a family of great composers, he is a senior disciple of Shri Maharajapuram Santhanam).	Vocal Recital

AUGUST

12.8.1995 Saturday (A) 5.30 P.M.	TWO-IN-ONE PROGRAMMES Kum. V. Subashni & Party (Bombay) (Student of Guru Shri T.K. Mahalingam Pillai of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharatanatya Kala Mandir)	Bharatanatyam
(B) 7.30 P.M.	Kum. Priya Ramachandran (Bombay) (Daughter and disciple Smt. Jayalakshmi Ramachandran , a Noted Gayaki of Bombay) Shri R. Madhavan (Bombay) Shri S. Shankaranarayanan (Bombay)	Vocal Violin Mridangam

13.8.1995
Sunday

Kum. N. Kiranavali (Madras)
(A scion of the legendary Gottu Vadyam Vidwan
Shri Narayana Iyenger, she is the disciple of father Shri N. Narasimhan
and brother Maestro Shri N. Ravikiran).
Master V.V.S. Murari (Madras)
Shri B. Ganapathiram (Madras)

Chitraveena

Violin
Mridangam

Vocal recital

15.8.1995
Tuesday 6.00 P.M.

Shri O.S. Arun (Delhi) & Party

(Born in a Musical family, trained initially by his father Shri O.V. Subramaniam, he is the brother of Shri O.S. Thiagarajan).

SEPTEMBER

9.9.1995
Saturday
6.00 P.M.

Shri K.N. Sashikiran (Madras)
(Trained under his father Gottuvadhyam Shri N. Narasimhan
and his brother Chitraveena Wizard Shri N. Ravikiran)
Kum. R. Hemalatha (Madras)
Shri Neyveli S. Venkatesh (Madras)

Vocal

Violin
Mridangam

10.9.1995
Sunday
5.30 p.m.

TWO-IN-ONE PROGRAMMES
Kum. B. Bhanumathi (Bombay)
(A scion of Gayaka Sikhmani Late Shri Palghat Anantharama
Bhagavathar, is trained by her mother Smt. Subbalakshmi).
Kum. Meera Mahadevan (Bombay)
Shri Rajesh Srinivasan (Bombay)

Vocal

Violin
Mridangam

(B) 7.30 p.m.

Shanti Mahesh (Bangalore)
(A scion of the renowned Karaikudi Veena Brothers).
Shri K. V. Mahesh (Bangalore)

Veena

Mridangam

23.9.1995
Saturday
6.00 P.M.

Kum. Pantula Rama (Vizag)
Shri Ivaturi Vijayeswara Rao (Vizag)
(Pantula Rama's Guru)
Shri K. Sadguru Charan (Vijayawada)

Vocal
Violin

Mridangam

24.9.1995
Sunday
6.00 P.M.

Smt. Mangalam Krishnamurthy
& Party (Bombay)

Vocal Recital

OCTOBER

7.10.1995
Saturday
6.00 p.M.

Smt. Akhila Janardhan (Bombay)
(A disciple of Smt. Mani Krishnaswamy among other gurus)
Shri R. Madhavan (Bombay)
Shri Sridhar Parthasarathy (Bombay)

Vocal

Violin
Mridangam

8.10.1995
Sunday
6.00 P.M.

Kum. Subha Ganesan (Madras)
(A scion of Karaikudi Veena Brothers and Mridangam
Shri Muthu Iyer, had she advanced training under
Smt. M.L. Vasanthakumari and Shri Calcutta K.S. Krishnamurthy)
Smt. N. Neela (Madras)
Shri V.M. Ganesan (Madras)

Vocal

Violin
Mridangam

14.10.1995
Saturday
6.00 P.M.

(Kasaravalli Twin Sisters)
Kums. Roopa & Deepa (Madras)
& Party.

Vocal Recital

(The Sisters have been under the tutelage of Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman & Shri T.K. Govinda Rao among others)

15.10.1995
Sunday
6.00 P.M.

Shri Mangalore K. Ananthram
Kum. Mangala Vaidyanathan (Bombay)
Master Sriram Gopalakrishnan (Bombay)
Shri K.S. Rangachari (Madras)
Master R. Gururaja Rao (Bombay)

Saxophone
Violin
Mridangam
Kanjira
Ghatam

Cultural Scene in Bombay

Summer Festival it was captioned. But the oppressive heat that this metropolis experienced since early summer this year was nowhere reflected in the musical scene. The concerts the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha presented during April - May in Pandal series continued the spring 'feel' projecting kaleidoscopic array of quality music. The artistes featured were all well up in the performing ladder and the fare they presented gave the Rasikas food for ear and food for thought. The concerts ensured in general that classical music in its traditional purity and placidity is quite safe in the hands of the future stars.

To begin with, April concerts comprised a variety of talents and subject pertinent to the present day musical clime. E. Gayathri who opened up the Summer Festival is already on artiste to reckon with, who has carved a niche for herself. A child prodigy, who at one time was making hay with her technical skill and showmanship, has now come a long way settling to a more poised, polished style treating Veena to vocalise. Yet, it is the Gayaki style that made her play a very pleasant experience.

That Gayathri is a fine Vainika goes without saying. She has mastered the technique, adopts a highly deflexive style, the flexibility of her fingering, their pliability on Gamaka plane however delicate and subtle it be, the speed, the control, the Sahitya Suddha, her Kalpana Swaras - everything is eloquent and comes most natural and spontaneous. Her Manodharma is well - reined and it is the musicality, the quality that weighs high in her concept of Veena play today. Barring the jarring note that emanated from the 'Contact mike' from time to time the music was well played and enjoyed by the artiste and the audience.

Ritigowla, Purvi Kalyani, Madhyamavathi Alapanas had quite some original phrasings in deflected delicacy. The Panchama Varja phrasings lent an extra dimensional aesthetic flourishes to Purvi Kalyani, while Madhyamavathi, save the early ambiguity, made a grand edifice of the Raga, worthy of Tyagaraja's Ramakatha Sudharasa Panamu. The sounding of Suddha Rishabha in the opening phase, in its augmented tone, gave a touch of Revathi, before Madhyamavathi proper registered itself. The Tanamalika, weaving hues of Kanada, Mohana Kalyani and Saramathi was refreshingly original, the garlanding of Ragas especially.

Khamas was an excellent piece too. Accompanying her were Arun Prakash (Mridangam) of the Palani Subramania Pillai's school, being a disciple of M.N. Kandaswamy and Kartick (Ghatam) who rose to the standard of the Vainika.

Aruna Sayeeram who performed on May Day made it a good cutcheri. Aruna has a style that has Gathram, Vishranti pep and punch with frills and flourishes. And more than that she knows how to discreetly use them to the pleasure of the listeners. Of late it looks she has been mastering the art of presentation and she has well succeeded in it. Even if one could perceive the touch of the Hindustani scalic beauty in a few of her Alapana forays it added a dimension to and not a digression from her rendition. The Vilamba grace, the poise and 'feel' of the Bhava of Raga and Sahitya were in tact and one enjoyed the concert.

Pantavarali in the early phase was a mode explored in its scalic plane with finer aesthetics subtly woven. It exuded a rare charm in its own way through Akara phrasings which Aruna employs abundantly. Siva

Siva Sivayana rada was sung with aplomb and involvement. And she made her Kalpana Swaras quite educative to 'students' by freewheeling through Janta, Dhatu phrases.

Chintamani and Syama Sastri's *Devi Brova Samayamide*, a rare piece of Bhakti and beauty was rendered in poised Vilambam bringing out the inherent poignance in the Raga and the composition.

Kambhoji was another masterpiece in her recital, highlighting the grace and grandeur of the Raga. She poured out the poignance in Gopalakrishna Bharati's lyrics of *Tiruvadi Charanam* and the tenor continued in the Niraval and Swaraprastharas enveloping the entire gamut of Kambhoji over the octaves. It was an instance of musical involvement touched up with performing punch. And that was satisfying to both connoisseur and the common man.

The Abhang, the Mohana Kalyani Tilana and moving Virutham from Tayumanavar's verses made excellent selections. But Aruna, from the bastion of Padam tradition, to leave out Padam was disappointing.

Hemalata has entrenched herself as a reliable accompanist. She is at home with any stylist as well as any performer, professional or amateur. That she lent equally a felicitous support on the violin goes without saying. Here is a star worth watching in the 'supporting' cast.

Govindarajan - Rangachari 'pair' providing Mridangam - Kanjira support was a fine-tuned team who played with sathvik strokes enhancing the concert's quality.

The close of April had a programme delving into the role Karnatak Music had played in the Films of yesteryears. About it later.

Charumathi Ramachandran was another artiste from MLV School who was

presented during the summer programmes. The oppressive heat and the light music close by, perhaps rendered the artiste a bit restless. She could not give out her best. However the training she has had under D.K. Jayaraman did show up in her Vishranti at some pieces and the aesthetic highpoints at that state. If GNB's brisk pace dominated *Dinamani Vamsa* (Harikambhoji), and MLV's flavour with Charumathi's own individuality came to fore in Lathangi *Aparadhamulan*, Sankarabharanam showed some poise in the Vilambam.

She stuffed in quite a number of rare compositions and sang a Tillana (Brindavana Saranga Eka Tala - Tisra Nadai) in Tarana style improvising in Vilambit, Madhya Laya and Drut and touching up with *Akaar Bols* etc. Innovation or new genre of composition?

Praveen's Mridangam lent a good support and his brief Thani with Ghatam was crisp.

Ranjani - Gayathri, the star products of Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Vidyalaya under the disciplined grooming of the veteran teacher. Sangeetha Bhushanam T.S. Krishnaswami, made their Guru and Gurukul proud when they ascended the Pandal stage on 14th May, and went on to conquer the hearts of the listeners.

The Sisters are prodigies, born with art instincts and poised with performing grif. There is so much synchrony in their play and programming, in their dialogue and 'diction', yet they hold their individual command in their own way. And their Manodharma radiates their mettle. Teamed up with Arun Prakash on the Mridangam and Sriram Subbaraman, yet another Mridangist trained by Trichy Raghava Iyer at Bombay, playing the Kanjira at times, the sisters scaled new heights to the delight of

their 'home' audience who had seen them grow in music.

They have turned on to be very polished, natural artistes seeking aesthetic beauty in every nuance they delve into. If there is a daring streak in the younger Gayathri, she is sure of success. The poised elder probes with certainty and with measured moves. No 'risks' in her sallies. The greatest advantage they have is both are fine vocalists and playing on violin what they would sing adds to the stringed melody a depth and diction that is to be relished and not written. And the way they complement each other while on Raga forays adds a tonal dimension that is spontaneous and splendorous.

This was evident in Ranjani's Alapana of Arabhi. The Raga unfolded itself in its multifarious beauties, now and then pepped up with tonal touches by Gayathri. Constant listening to stalwarts and stars have helped them mould their Manodharma aesthetically. The very opening storke in the bass brought out in bold relief the glow of Ritigoula and *Janani* flowed in sweet splendour.

Gayathri's excellence rose to new high when she wove a melodic fantasy of Todi (a Raga of elusive beauty and one that eludes many musicians' grip) with deep involvement. A flash in the mid - upper octave was enough to establish it on Alapana plane. Then on it was an immaculate edifice that she built, soaked in Bhava and microtonal flourishes. Tyagaraja's *Koluvamaregada* was a Sangati-studded piece rendered with relish. The sisters' indulgence in one-Avarthana swaras in a dialogue, the dart after dart and the skilful manipulation of the finale were testimony to their dueting skill and synchrony.

While senior artistes had given the RTP a go by, the youngsters scaled a complex Pallavi in Chatustra Jampa Khanda Nadai

with elan, spinning Ragamalika swaras. The Pallavi Raga Kalyani and the Tanam had an 'elite' grace.

Even the much-heard *Eppo Varuvadu* (Jonpuri) had a refreshing aura in the melodic "Chodukku" (twists) the girls gave. Needless to say that the percussionists, equally enthusiastic and energetic, gave a wholesome support raising the concert to a well-knit instrumental quartet.

The place of Karnatak music in films - yesterday, today and future perhaps was the theme on which G. S. Mani gave an absorbing and entertaining lecture demonstration for well over 3 hours, where incidentally he enlightened the audience with musical theory, the Raga Lakshanas, some historical evolution and the universality of some Karnatic Ragas in world music.

His association with film music and production of Sangita Parampariam for the media have given him an insight into the 'Historical analyses' of the subject. While the music of yesteryears had been fully based on the compositions of great masters and the singer/actor too were well trained musicians, the present made an apology of the Karanatak base. The examples he reeled of in Kalyani, Pantuvarali, Mohanam, Charukesi, Dharmavati, Kiravani, Chakravakam and last but not the least, Mayamalavagaula gave one a 'peep' into Sangeeta Lakshana and musicology. Students of music would have much benefited from this part of the lec-dem.

The irony of present day filmi Sangeet 'seeking' roots in classical Ragas was poignantly touched with the medley of sound that goes as music in film today, the Jazz, the Rap, the Rock having its toll. Would the Indian film music have an identity in future?

It was well worth an education despite the oppressive heat of the summer.

The 5 year old Talent Promotion Programmes organised by the Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha with Central Sangeet Natak Akademi sponsorship has been growing from strength to strength. Started with a view to bringing to the concert forum talents waiting at the wings, (and presenting them in the monsoon sessions) the Sabha has not only achieved its objectives but has added to the numbers who have been consistently moving on to the more spacious 'Pandal' cutcheris. This year a new dimension was added by extending the presentation to Dance segment. And one of features was including a few kid talents amidst budding stars.

The very opener was young Krishna, the talented son and disciple of Madurai T.N. Seshagopalan. It was a concert where talent and training, besides heritage spoke for the music. The youngster was full of enthusiasm and energy and handled Dikshitar's edifices, like *Meenakshime mudam* (Purvi Kalyani) and *Amba Neelayatakshi* (Neelanbari) with confidence. Though the polish and sheen of these grand numbers requires more of experience and introspection, the attempt and efforts were good.

Krishna was fluent in *Manasuloni* (Hindolam) and *Vanchatonuna* (Karnranjani). It was bold on his part to choose Todi on a technical jaunt. One admired his skill. Nevertheless he should do more Sadhaka on its subtle nuances and indepth graces to get the essence of Todi in his system. Then adding the Sruti Bheda etc could yield excellent results. Swati Tirunal's *Sarasijanabha* was neat.

Accompanist R. K. Sivakumar (Violin) and B. Sivaraman (Mridangam) provided amiable support.

The laudable objective of unearthing hidden talents was, one may say, achieved when Prasad Venkataraman, an Engineer

by profession stood out as a fine performer too. Groomed by the veteran teacher, performer T. M. Thiagarajan of Semmangudi School, Prasad has acquired maturity in presentation and his concert was one of "Ghathra Sangeet." There was grace, grandeur, delicacy and depth. Endowed with resonant voice, he has moulded it to the style with fine Sadhaka ensuring clarity of diction and delivery.

The very opening Todi Varnam had the stamp of the master and also registered the innate musical glow of the chela. And Prasad carried it through Pantuvarali piece *Saramegani*.

Was it the song structure, or the Sahitya sophistry or the musical rendition that captured the audience in Suddha Dhanyasi? All the three, one may say. Ambujam Krishna's *Azhaga*, *Azhaga* was spell-binding. The way Prasad wove through the song in all poignance and crisp Swaras was touching.

After a spirited rendition of *Ganamurthe* (Ganamurti) which in the hands of the trio (Neela-Jaykumar, the artiste-couple accompanists on Violin and Mridangam) lifted the performance to welcome heights, the grandeur and splendour of Kalyani befitted the scheme of programming well. Usually Kalyani is gently dealt with, picturing its euphaneous beauty. But here was Kalyani in a different mould. And Tyagaraja's *Sande hamu* - (Adi - Tisra Nadai) came out as a musical essay, finely exploring the Niraval forays in *Vande Gunaseela Vaibhava Uruga Sayana Dasarathe*. And the swaras had sparks of rhythmic played into smooth flow. The Thukkadas were equally engaging.

Here is an artiste who deserves a major slot.

Preceding Prasad's vocal recital 11 year old Gouri Krishnamoorthy gave a 2 hour Bharata Natyam recital. The child

artiste has potential in rhythm and art interest and energy. And she went about her numbers as she had been trained, with confidence. The choreography suited her age. No imposition of indepth Bhava. Nevertheless the technique, the postures and footwork required quite some pruning, which the mentor Padmini Radhakrishnan can easily handle.

Yaar Adinar (Vandanadharini), *Shiva Rama Krishna* and Kurathi dance were numbers that had some novelty in song and substance.



More and more NRIs are getting seriously involved in classical arts of India, music and dance, and one such promising talent who showed her mettle in Bharata Natyam is Canada-based Bageshree Vaze. Having had her early stints with Menaka Thakkar and Sudha Chandrasekhar at Canada, she came on a Fellowship to their Guru Shri T. K. Mahalingam Pillai of Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir. And a near - year intensive training, almost on Gurukul type cast her on a different mould, making her a fine dancer of traditional finesse.

Bageshree's performance at NCPA, Little Theatre, was a crisp 2hour fare where mime and melody, technique and expression fused. A slightly modified choreography enhanced the linear beauty and lyrical quality of the famous Huseni Swarajati *E Mayaladira* portraying and Uttama Khandita Nayika. The danseuse had imbibed the master's firm conviction in subtle expression and gestures with restraint. Rhythm and aesthetics are in her system. Learning music (Hindustani) has also given her a melodic resonance that reflects in her Bhava exposition.

For expressional felicity Sivan's *Mahalakshmi* (Sankarabharam) and

Narayana Teertha's Tarangam could be cited examples. The Saranga Tillana, the Guru's own composition, came as a capping finale of intricate beauty.

The blend of Geetha Murali's music and Vasant Kumar's melodious Nattuvangam lent solid support and young Harikrishna, a scion of the Parampara showed signs of fitting into the family art stream playing the Mridangam.

Kinnari



The two Talent Promotion concerts held on 8th July 1995, were commendable.

The first was by Padmini Ravi (Muscat) who is the daughter of vaineeka Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy. She had her initial training under Smt. T.R. Balamani and is at present trained by Sangitha Kalanidhi Smt. D.K. Pattammal. The young artist gifted with mellifluous voice started the concert with Kedaragowla Varnam followed by a composition of Muthiah Bhagavata 'Lambodara' in Navarasakannada. Padmini's essaying of Suddha Dhanyasi and Hemavathi were very pleasing and full of Manodharma. The Swaraprasthas in the above said Ragas, to the rare Kritis of Dikshitar, Shri Parthasaradini and *Hariyuvathi Haimavathi* respectively, definitely showed the ease with which she carried herself in Laya. But one certainly feels that the Dikshitar's Kritis could have been rendered at a slower pace (mark of D.K.P.'s seal) which creates more involvement.

The main Alapana in Kambhoji was dealt with leisurely wherein she effortlessly reached the high octaves. With the natural gift of flawless voice, the artist has lot of scope to traverse in the world of Karnatak Music.

The accompanying artist B. Anantharaman (Violin) was a good support and

the Thani by Mridangist Sankaranarayanan showed his prowess as a special category in the rungs of up and coming artist. The rounding off of the concert with old Tamil songs like "Vallikkanavan" in folk tune was a welcome change.

The second concert by Viswanath Parasuram, who had his training under Sangitha Kalanidhi Shri K.S. Narayanaswamy and Shri. T.V. Sankaranarayanan began with an impressive Varnam of Balamuralikrishna in Shanmukhapriya. The brisk Manodharma Swaras for Varnam itself set the tempo of the concert. This was followed by *Sri Mahaganapathy* in Gowla. The Alapana, of Sri Raga was impeccable and Viswanath's rendition of Ragas at slow pace, dwelling at each Swara, made an immediate impact and rapport with the audience.

The Manipravala Kriti of Dikshitar-Sri *Abhayamaba* (Sri) was soulful. The young artist rendered two Alapanas in Pratimadhyama Ragas, Ranjani and Pantuvarali. The limited scope of Ranjini was handled by Viswanath efficiently. The maturity he

showed in delineating Sri Raga took a back seat during Pantuvarali Alapana because, one felt, that it could have been better if he had not indulged in nuances that gave it a shade of Subhapantuvarali. Dikshitar's Mayamalavagaula piece, *Rama Rama Kalikalusha* was well received by the audience. Gopalakrishna Bharathy's 'Varugalamo' in Manji did not stand up to the mark as Padam, which is usually sung at a very slow pace.

The Violin support by R. Madhavan was very good and the Thani by Sriram who is the disciple of Shri Ragava Iyer deserves applause for the subdued beats of Laya supreme! Viswanath rounded off the concert with the unusual note of patriotic piece 'Vazhia Senthamizh' of Subramania Bharathiar.

The factor that reigned predominantly in these two concerts is Sruti Suddham which sometimes is a rarity in Karnatak Platform!

Janaki Swamy

Music & Architecture

The Temple of Music

LIKE THE SIGHT OF A GOPURAM WHICH IS THE FIRST sign of a temple (Devalaya) that one can see from afar what draws a listener first to any music is Svara (the musical note.) This Svara like the Gopura is the Sthularupa (physical form) of music. On coming near the temple and going through the Gopura one perceives by turn the various Prakaras, Mantapas, Stambhas, Tirthas (architectural features) and Sannidhis (shrines). These correspond to the various Lakshanas (forms) of Sangita (music) like -Sahitya, Raga, Rasa, Alankara and Pramana. After due preparation, one is led to the Mulasthan, to the seat of the Lord Himself. This is the equivalent of the Sukshmasvara or Svasvarupa of "the devotee in the Lord". Therein is one's Anubhava (experience) complete, namely, in the Nada or Svara, or Svarupa of the Lord. Beginning with the Sthulasvara (physical form) one has arrived by Sadhana to the stage of the Sukshmasvara (inner music) when one's entire Sarira vibrates in sympathy with the Premasvarupa (loving presence) of the Lord. Thus had Andal and Meera and Nandanar realised the oneness of Svara and Svarupa in the "Form of the Lord", *Svasvarupanusandhana paramapremarupa*.

Those who say they are content with the pattern of the Svaras alone, mistake the Sthulasvara for the Sukshmasvara like being content with seeing the gopura alone, without venturing inside for the Darshana (sight) of the Lord. Svara therefore is the first item of attraction in music, and it is also the last point of experience. In between, one must make the arduous journey through all the Lakshanas of Sangita.

For most Sadhakas, there is no short cut from the Gopuram to the Garbhagrha, in inner shrine.

- Kesavram N. Iengar

Courtesy: "Kalakshetra"

Book Review

"Wit and Wisdom in Karnatak Music"

Yet Another Garland : (Biographical Dictionary of Carnatic Composers & Musicians) Book- III. By N. Rajagopalan I.A.S. (Retd.). 1994. Published by Carnatic Classics, Madras - 600 020. Pp 442. Price 220/-

Yet another garland has bloomed in the garden of melody. It adds to the fragrance and hues of the earlier ones and makes the environment more colourful and enchanting. There is so much of Bhakti and aesthetic flourishes to be perceived in its making, an insight into every minutiae, be it of art, artist or advent. New themes flow from the author's imagination and study while old ones glow in added glory of new insight and vision. The search goes on and the Manodharma touches a new high. The "Ensemble of Eminence" radiates the comparative brilliance of the Musical Trinity - and we move through the "Perennial Jungle of Divine Love" along with Uthukkadu's "honeyed nectar." Some more gleanings of Gopalakrishna Bharatiyar's life, "the gifted poet of the masses", enlightens you.

Suddenly you are transported from Kaveri to Yamuna as the author's imagination swells with the swirls of "Adi Perukku" and merges with the Saint's *Nowka Charitramu* in Yamuna. Tyagaraja confiding his 'Vision' of *Nowka Charitramu* to his wife at the banks of Kaveri makes of the author a romantic litterateur.

With the emergence of the 3rd Garland, the Series have woven nearly 1250 varieties of musical 'blooms'. The series also encompasses "memorable events and performances, unique records and achievements."

There is one whole part making a veritable essay of snippets, juicy anecdotes, miracles, incidents etc.-all carved in golden letters. In fact, the author has woven his "Golden Tapestry" bringing to light many a Guru-Sishya anecdotes. Where "Insult" turned out to be a "Passport to glory" and the "axed limb did not wither away but each grew into a mighty Orpheus, Heracles or Apollo".

This is the age of child-prodigies. And the author's observations are worth reproducing with a saying of wisdom that goes with it:

Premature Lotus - blooms

"When Lotus blooms, bees come of their own accord."

- Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

"When child prodigies are presented, sponsors and Rasikas abound. Glamour of age, charm of uninhibited delivery, fragrance of a captivating virgin voice and the felicity of the blooming tonenaturally enchant. Once the initial gloss or blush vanishes premature exposure, excessive exploitation in formative years and *Avarohana* of practice bring to the fore their cumulative negative effects leading to discomfiture, disenchantment and disappointment. Recent history reveals the truth of the old practice not to exhibit before product is fully ripe. A theme for productive research.....?"

The 'Bio-history' of Nayanmars and Alwars make a completion of the purpose of such a tome in Karnatak music. The chapter on "Nama Sankirtan" has arrived at a very timely hour. Traversing the breadth and length of Bharat it awakens the people to the simple truth that there is no better means than this for National Integration

"Let Us Skip Tiruvaiyaru - 1994" (A Farce) is an extension of that which appeared in *Another Garland*: Donning the role of Tyagaraja's "travel agent", Lord Rama recounts, phrase by phrase, the songs of Tyagaraja describing the "virgin verdant beauty" of the Panchanada Kshetra.

But lo! Suddenly the scene changes and you are faced with the stark realities of the present. Pollution-of air, water, body and mind! More. "Where pure Nada prevailed, loud noise....pervades".

In the process of urbanisation, the tranquillity and sanctity is robbed. Ultimately "Where is Tyagaraja? Where is Tyagaraj-ism? Where is all the sanctity that Tyagaraja symbolised and was proud of? Is not Aradhana Shraddhanjali?" Thunders Lakshmana as Sita shed tears.

The Stitapragna that is Rama Consoles:

"Janaki, grieve not. We came this year with hopes of rejuvenating moral stocks and recharging our divinity; but things are seen going awry. Has not the Sage of Wisdom (Tyagaraja) anticipated all these himself in *Nadupai Balikeru* (Madhyamavati) quiet significantly?"

Tears roll down your checks too.

The cryptic critic in the author hits the nail right on the head when he rises in Roudra against an eminent musician claiming to serve the cause of Karnatak music by including film songs in his repertoire and drawing huge audience to his concerts and making them in the process listen to Karnatak music.

"Laudable service to the oldest living art indeed! This art is perhaps in dire need of such inducements and incentives! The pill of Classical music perhaps needs be so profusely sugar-coated that its soul and appeal are to be subordinated to ephemeral pain killers and drugs!"

Karnatak music has its own strength to survive and flourish. At every turn of the century "a devotee of art takes up a pioneering project at his cost" and one such is the author of the *Garlands* - man's endeavours, "like the proverbial 'Ekantapuram Station master', who had to attend to everything from flagging off trains and shunting of wagons to appearance in his destined role or Avatar as Station-master!", to quote the author himself.

And how were the *Garlands* born? "Destiny leads the willing, but, drags the unwilling" and the author relates thus:

"I was musing a song heard at a Kalakshepam on the previous day. Sangita Kalanidhi Papanasam Sivan enjoyed the sweetness of the tone and took me, a 11-12 year old lad, to his home at the Theosophical Society and started musical training on the day of Vijayadasami in 1934-35. The late S.S. Mani, Bhagavata was his only disciple then. I was a willing boy. Yet destiny dragged me elsewhere since the guru left for films. Music, the manifestation of emotional impulses, was not to be my field of activity. The *'Garlands'* are the *Prayaschitta* for it".

Perhaps just as the realm of melody is inexhaustible, the weaving of *Garland's* too should go on extending its scope to the music of north of Vindhya, then crossing overseas to the S.E. Asia & Far East and leap forward to the West covering the entire gamut of World Music.

May Almighty and Paramacharya, whose bio-history shines as the jewel in the crown, shower THEIR blessings on the author to fulfil this Sadhana in the cause of Music.

R. S.

"Pallavi - Its Rationale"

Prof. R. Visweswaran's analytical Article In '*Shanmukha*' (4/95) affords Elucidation and enlightenment to layfolks and Innocent listeners. As remarked by him, Pallavi should have come into currency on its own right like other structures and developed into an independent Musical form earning A 'reserved seat' in concert pattern since.

- I. It Demands and permits extended delineation of ragas and swaras, which should normally tend to tire audience if done ancillary to kritis.
- II. The *Inter se* competitive fullness of the jama vocalist, Instrumentalist and percussionist comes to marked focus only at Pallavi. The talents of the violinist and the anticipatory skill and Acrobatic affluence of the percussionists *vis-a-vis* the niraval, Pallavi and swara taken in specific conjunction and unison with tala could be paraded fully only in Pallavi.
- III. It is only in Pallavi, tala claims equality of status with Raga, Swara, etc. *Lakshana* comes into full play. tala is aid to kriti in which Raga and Sahitya dominate.
- IV. Sahitya in Pallavi has little relevance and Sahitya Bhava is incidental. Even a phrase like *Mandahasa vadana, hare Krishna* would suffice as Mudicondan Venkatarama Ayyar clarified at the Music Academy. Pallavi probably highlights the lakshana aspects.

Aggressive postures or excesses of accompanists have a place while on Pallavi whereas they are like *Grihalakshmis* of old playing a supportive role while on kritis, etc. Tradition permits freedom to them and they get a chance to excel!

Madras

N. RAJAGOPALAN.



அருணகிரிநாதரின் 'சந்தச்' சித்திரங்கள்

கே.சி. தியாகராஜன்

அருணகிரிநாதரின் திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்கள் எல்லாம் சந்தங்களின் அடிப்படையில் அமைந்தவை. வண்ணப்பாட்டு என்னும் சந்தப்பாடல்கள் கலிப்பாவின் ஒரு முடுகியல் ஆகும்.

திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களில் அருணகிரிநாதர் கையாண்டுள்ள சந்தங்களின் அமைப்புக்களை ஆராய்ந்து பார்க்கையில், பொதுவாக, தனன, தனதன, தனதனன, தனன தனதன, தனதனதனதனன என்னும் ஐந்து வகைச் சந்தங்கள் பல்வேறு மாறுபட்ட உருவங்களுடன் தனித்தும், இணைந்தும், விளங்குவது தெரியவரும்.

இந்தச் சந்தங்களை இசைக்கலையின் பிரதான அம்சங்களில் ஒன்றாகிய தாளச் சொற்கட்டுக்களுடன் ஒப்பிட்டுப் பார்க்கையில், தாளத்தின் ஐந்து நடைகளைப் (கதிகளை) பிரதானமாகக் கொண்டவை என்பது நன்கு புலனாகும். சந்தங்களுக்கு ஒத்த நடைகள் பின்வருமாறு:

'தனன', மூன்று மூன்றாக அமையும் திசர்ம்-'தகிட'
'தன தன', நான்கு நான்காக அமையும் சதுரர்ம்-'தகதிமி'
'தன தனன', ஐந்து ஐந்தாக அமையும் கண்டம்-'தகதகிட'
'தனனதனதன', ஏழு ஏழாக அமையும் மிசர்ம்-'தகிடதகதிமி'
'தனதனதனதனன', ஒன்பது ஒன்பதாக அமையும் ஸங்கீர்ணம்-'தகதிமிதகதகிட'

'சந்தச்' சித்திரங்கள்.

இன்றைக்குச் சுமார் 600 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன் அவதரித்த அருணகிரிநாதர் 26,000 திருப்புகழ்பாடல்களை அருளியுள்ளார் என்று கூறப்படுகிறது; ஆயினும் 1,300 பாடல்களே இன்று நமக்குக் கிடைத்துள்ளன.

அருணகிரிநாதர் தாம் வழிபடும் தெய்வமான முருகப் பெருமான் மீது சந்த அடிப்படையில் புனைந்துள்ள திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களில் ஆங்காங்கு சிற்சிலவற்றில் தாளத்தின் சொற்கட்டுக்களை அமைத்திருப்பதை அற்புதம் என்றே சொல்ல வேண்டும். இவ்வாறு அமைந்துள்ள சொற்கட்டுகள் லயக்கருவிகளுக்கான சொற்கட்டுக்களாகவும், சில தாளக் கருவிகளின் ஓசைகளைப்போல் ஒலிக்கும் சொற்கட்டுக்களாகவும் விளங்குகின்றன. இவ்வாறு அமைந்துள்ள திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களில், சில கண்டிகைகள் முழுவதும் இத்தகையை சொற்கட்டுகளாக விளங்குவது தனிச் சிறப்பாகும். ஒவ்வொரு சந்தத்தையும் எத்தனை விதங்களாக மாற்றி ஒலிக்கச் செய்யலாமோ, அத்தனைவகைகளையும் திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களிலே அமைத்துள்ளார் அருணகிரிநாதர். ஒரு வகை சந்தத்தின் ஒரே வகை ஒலியுடன் அமைந்துள்ள பாடல்கள் பல. ஒரே பாடலில் ஒரு சந்தத்தின் பலவகை ஒலி மாற்றங்களையும் காண்பதாக அமைந்தவைகளும் பல. இதே போல தனித்தனி சந்தத்தில் விளங்கும் திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களன்றி, ஒன்றிற்கு மேற்பட்ட சந்தங்கள் ஒரே பாடலில் இணைந்து ஒலிக்கும் பாடல்களும் உண்டு. இவ்வகை சந்தச் சித்திரங்களாக விளங்கும் திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களை உதாரணங்களுடன் பார்ப்போம்.

'தனன-தனன' (தகிட தகிட) என்ற சந்தத்தை அப்படியே கொண்டுள்ள பாடலையும், இதே நடைச் சந்தத்தை 'தனாதனா' 'தான தான' 'தத்தத்த' என்றவாறு அமைந்துள்ள பாடல்களையும், இந்த நான்கு வகைகளையும் ஒருங்கே கொண்ட பாடலையும் காண்போம்.

'தனன தனன' என மூன்று மூன்று குறில் எழுத்துக்களோடு அமைந்துள்ள பழனித்தலத்துத் திருப்புகழ் (3,3)

தமரு மமரு மனையு மினிய
தனமு மரசு மயலாகத்
தறுகண் மறலி முடுகுகயிறு
தலையை வளைய ஏறியாதே

'தான தான' என்று ஒரு நெடிலும் ஒரு குறிலுமாகி (2+1) இதே திசர் நடைச் சந்தத்தில் விளங்கும் பொதுத் திருப்புகழ்:

ஆரவார மாயி ருந்து - ஏமதாதரோடி வந்து
ஆதி வேலை போன்மு ழங்கி - அடர்வார்கள்.

இந்தப் பாடலின் கடைசிச் சந்தங்கள் 'தத்த' என்று அமைந்துள்ளதைக் கவனிக்கலாம்.

திசர் நடைச் சந்தத்தின் இந்த இருவகைகள் அன்றி, தனா தனன தான தந்த என்ற இந்த நான்கு வகைகளையும் ஒருங்கே கொண்ட விராலிமலைத் திருப்புகழ்:

கொடா தவனை யேபு கழ்ந்து
குபேரனென வேமொழிந்து
குலாவி அவ மேதிரிந்து - புவிமீதே.

இனி நான்கு நான்காக அமையும் சதுரர்ம் நடைச் சந்தத்தில் விளங்கும் சில வகைகளைப் பார்ப்போம்.

'தனதன தனதன' என்று நான்கு நான்கு குறில் எழுத்துக்களோடு அமைந்த திருத்தணிகைத் திருப்புகழ்:

அரகர சிவனரி அயனிவர் பரவிமுன்
அறுமுக சரவண பவனே என்
றுநுதின மொழிதர அசுரர்கள் கெட அயில்
அனலென எழவிடும் அதிதிரா.

இந்த சதுரர்ம் நடைச் சந்தத்தை 'தானன தானன' 'தனனா தனனா' 'தானா தானா' 'தந்தன தந்தன' 'தனத்த தனத்த' என்றெல்லாம் திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களிலே கையாண்டிருக்கிறார் அருணகிரிநாதர்.

'தானா தானா' என்று நெடில் எழுத்துக்களாகவே அமைந்துள்ள திரு ஆருர் திருப்புகழ்:

பாலோ தேனோ பாகோ வானோர்
பாரா வாரத் தமுதேயோ
பாரோர் சீரோ வேனோர் வாழ்வோ
பானோ வான்முத் தென நீள

'தன்னாதனத்த' என்று சதுரர் நடைச் சந்தத்தில் விளங்கும் சுவாமிமலைத் திருப்புகழ்:

மருவே செறித்த குழலார் மயக்கி
மதனாகமத்தின் விரகாலே
மயலே எழுப்பி இதழே அருந்த
மலைபோல் மூலைக்குள் உறவாகி

அடுத்த ஐந்து ஐந்தாக 'தனதனன'-தன தனன' என்று ஒலிக்கும் கண்ட நடையை ஒத்த சந்தம், முறையே,

'தனதனன' தானனன தந்தான-தனதான-தனதனா-தானான, என்றெல்லாம் ஒலிக்கும் வகையில் பல திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்கள் விளங்குவதைப் பார்க்கலாம். முதலில் 'தனதனன' என்று ஐந்தும் குறில் எழுத்துக்களாகவே அமைந்துள்ள பழனித்தலத் திருப்புகழ்:

முருகுசெறி-குழலவிழ-முகைபுளக-மெழநிலவு
முறுவல்தர-விரகமெழ-அநுராகம்
முதிர்வச-மறவிதரி-எழுகைவளை-கலகலென
முகநிலவு-குறுவெயர்வு-துளிவீச.

"தாதனன தாதனன" என்று ஒரு நெடிலும் மூன்று குறிலுமாக ஐந்தாகி ஒலிக்கும் மற்றொரு பழனித் திருப்புகழ்:

அறுமுகம் அறுமுகம் அறுமுகம் அறுமுகம்
அறுமுகம் அறுமுகம் என்று பூதி
ஆகமணி மாதவர்கள் பாதமலர் குடுமடி
யார்கன்பத மேதுணைய தென்றுநாளும்

இனி, 'தனன தனதன' என்று ஏழ் ஏழாக ஒலிக்கும் மிசர் நடைச் சந்தம், 'தான தனதன' 'தத்த தனதன' 'தானதானன' தனத்தானா, தானதன்னா தானதன்னா, என்று பலவகைகளாக ஒலி செய்யும் பாடல்களை, திருப்புகழ்களில் காணலாம். 'தனனதனதன' என ஏழும் குறில்களாகவே அமைந்துள்ள சுவாமிமலைத் திருப்புகழ்:

குமரகுருபர-முருக சரவண
குசுசண்முககரி பிறகான
குழக சிவசுத-சிவயநமவென
குரவனருள்குரு -மணியே என்று

மிசர் நடைச் சந்தம் 'தானதனதன' என்று முதலிலே ஒரு நெடிலும், மற்றவை குறில்களாகவும் அமைந்துள்ள மற்றுமொரு சுவாமி மலைத் திருப்புகழ்:

பாதிமதிநதி-போது மணி சடைநாதரருளிய குமரேசா
பாகு கனி மொழி-மாது குறமகள்-பாதம் வருடிய மணவாளா.

இதே மிசர் நடைக்கு ஒத்த சந்தத்தில் 'தத்த தானன' என்று விளங்கும் பொதுத் திருப்புகழ்:

கண்டு போல் மொழி-வண்டு சேர்குழல்
கண்கள் சேல்மதி - முகம் வேய் தோள்
கண்டுபாவனை-கொண்டு தோள்களில்
ஒண்டு காதலில் - இருகோடு,

அடுத்து, ஒன்பது ஒன்பதாக அமையும் ஸங்கீர்ண நடைக்கு ஒத்த சந்தம், 'தனதனதனதனன' 'தானாதனதனன' தானாதானதன' என்றெல்லாம் அமையும். 'தத்தத்தனதான' என்றமைந்த காஞ்சித்தலத்துத் திருப்புகழ், ஸங்கீர்ண நடைக்கு ஒத்ததாக அமைந்துள்ளது.

அற்றக்கிரைதேடி - அத்தத்திலுமாசை
பற்றித்தவியாத - பற்றைப் பெறுவேனோ

'தானாதனதான' என்று அமையும் பேரூர் தலத்துத் திருப்புகழ்:

தீராப்பிணி தீர- சீவாத்துமஞான
ஊராட்சியதான - ஓர்வாக்கருள்வாயே.

இதுவரை திசர், சதுரர், கண்ட, மிசர், ஸங்கீர்ண நடைகளுக்கொத்த சந்தங்களில் தனித்தனியாக அமைந்த திருப்புகழ்பாடல்களைப் பார்த்தோம். இனி ஒன்றிற்கு மேற்பட்ட சந்தங்களில் அமைந்துள்ள சில பாடல்களைப் பார்ப்போம். திருச்செந்தூர்த்தலத்துத் திருப்புகழ் ஒன்று, தனதனன-தனதனன-தத்தன -தானா என்று 5,5,4,4, என்றவாறு (இரண்டு கண்டம் இரண்டு சதுரர்) அமைந்துள்ளது.

இயலிசையில்-உசிதவஞ்சிக்- கயர்வாகி
இரவுபகல்-மனதுசிந்தித்துழலாதே
உயர்கருணை-புரியுமின்பக்-கடல்முழுகி
உனைஎனதுள் ளறியுமன்பைத்-தருவாயே

திரிசிராப்பள்ளித் திருப்புகழ் ஒன்று:

தனனதானன-தனனதானன
தானாதானாதானாதானா-தனதானா

என்று (7,7,4,4,4,3) அமைந்துள்ளது.

குமுதவாயக்கனி-அமுதவாக்கினர்
கோலே வேலே சேலே போலே - அழகான

இவ்வாறெல்லாம் ஐந்து நடைகளில் தனித்தும் ஒன்றிரண்டு இணைந்தும் அமைந்துள்ள திருப்புகழ்ப்பாடல்கள் பல அன்றி, ஒரு திருப்புகழில் ஐந்து நடைகளையும் அமைத்திருக்கிறார் அருணாகிரிநாதப்பெருமான். வயலூர் தலத்துத் திருப்புகழ் "விகடபரிமள" என்று துவங்குவது. இதன் அமைப்பைப் பார்த்தால்,

(7)	(4)	(4)	
தனனதனதன	- தனதன	தனதன	
தனனதனதன	- தனதன	தனதன	
(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)
தத்தத்த	- தத்தனன	- தத்தத்த	- தத்தனன

} இரண்டு தடவை

பின்னர் மூன்றாம் தடவையில் முதல் இரண்டு வரிகள் ஆனதும்,

(9) (9)
தந்தத் தனதனன தந்தத்தன தனன

(3) (3) (3) (3)
தந்த தா, னா, ..

என்றவாறு, 7,4,5: 9, 3 என ஐந்து நடைகளையும் கொண்ட சந்தமாக அமைந்து விளங்கும் திருப்புகழின் இடையிலேவரும் சொற்கட்டுப் பகுதியை மட்டிலும் பார்க்கலாம்.

திசுட திசுசுட-திசுசுட-திசுசுட
 தசுட தசுசுட-தசுசுட தசுசுட
 திக்குத்தி-குத்திசுட தக்குத்த குத்திசுட
 டுமிடடு மிமிட-டுமிமிட டுமிமிட
 டமட டமமட-டமமட டமமட
 டுட்டுட்டு-டுட்டுமிட-ட்டட்ட-ட்டட்ட
 திசுர்தி திசுதிசு-திசுசுர்தி-திசுசுர்தி
 தசுர்தி தசுதசு-தசுசுர்தி-தசுசுர்தி
 திக்குத் திசுத் திசுர்தி-தக்குத் தசுத் தசுர்தி
 என்று பே...ரி..

வண்ணப்பாடல்கள் வகைகளில் ஒன்றாகிய சந்தப்பாடல்களாம் திருப்புகழ்ப்பாடல்கள், சந்த அடிப்படையிலே, எண்ணிலடங்காததான தாள சூட்சுமங்களைத் தன்னிடத்தே கொண்டு உள்ளன. திருப்புகழ்ப்பாடல்களை அவை அவையமைந்துள்ள சந்தங்களின் அழகு குன்றமால் கையாளுவது மிகவும் அவசியம். குறிலை நெடிலாக்கியோ, நெடிலைக் குறிவாக்கியோ, ஒன்றை விட்டு விட்டோ கையாண்டால் சந்தத்தின் அந்தம் சிதைந்து போகும். இதன்றி, திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களுக்கு, தாளங்களை நிர்ணயம் செய்யும் போது சந்த அமைப்பினை கொண்டு சந்த அமைப்புக்குக் குந்தகம் நேராவண்ணம் செய்வதே சிறந்ததாகும்.

முருகப் பெருமான் அருள்பெற்று, பக்திச் சுவையோடு, தாளநுணக்கங்களை செறிந்த ஆயிரக்கணக்கான திருப்புகழ்ப் பாடல்களை அருளிய அருணகிரிப் பெருமானுக்கு, இசையுலகம் என்றென்றும் கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கும் என்பதில் சிறிதேனும் ஐயமில்லை.

Courtesy "Souvenir" of Music Academy, Madras (1976)

